



JESUS the SAVIOUR of ^eWORLD.

To face the Title.

A C O M P L E A T
H I S T O R Y

William O F *Straburgh*
The Holy Gospel:

Containing the
Incarnation, Birth, Doctrine, Passion,
Resurrection, and Ascension

O F O U R
Lord JESUS CHRIST.

To which is added,

A Journal of the PEREGRINATION of our
BLESSED SAVIOUR:

Extracted from the four *Évangelists*, the *Acts* of the
Apostles, and other Writings of the

NEW TESTAMENT.

Digested in a Chronological Order.

Illustrated with NOTES,
*Explaining several difficult Passages, and reconciling many
Texts, that are seemingly contradictory.*

Adorn'd with Cuts, engraven by JOHN STURT.

By LAURENCE HOWEL, A. M.

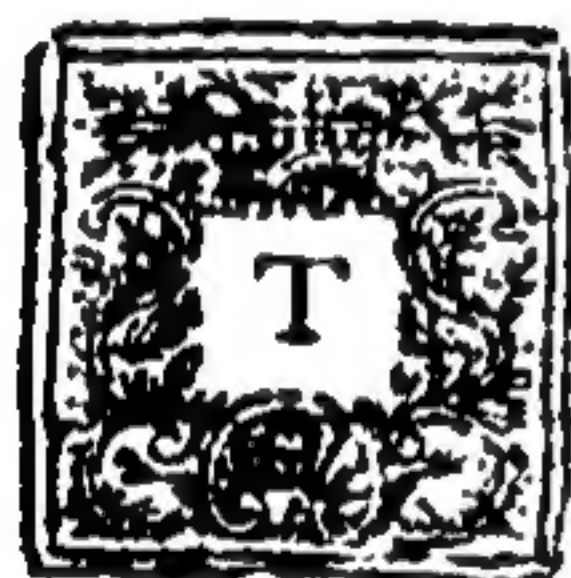
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THE
P R O E M
TO THE
New Testament.



THE Historical Part of the *New Testament* is contain'd in the Gospels, and deservedly claims our greatest Esteem, as conveying to us the blessed Tidings of our recovering that happy State which our first Parents forfeited in Paradise. All those Excellencies which in general belong to the *Old Testament*, may in a more peculiar manner be claimed by the *New*; for as St. *Augustin* says, *l. 1. de Consens. Evang. c. 1.* "What the Law and the Prophets only foretold, the Gospel plainly demonstrates to have been compleated." If therefore the good and holy Men under the Dispensation of the Law, which was but a Shadow of what hath since come to pass, were encouraged to undergo the severest Persecutions, in hopes of a Reward to come, what greater Encouragement had the Saints under the Gospel to suffer Extremity, when the Reward was gone before them? From hence the Church in all Ages has drawn vast Advantage; hence the Martyrs in the midst of their Agonies took Magnanimity, look-
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ing up to the Author of their Reward. Thus the Protomartyr, St. *Stephen*, in a Shower of Stones, was comforted with a Sight of the Son of God. Hence the holy Apostles, and the rest of our Saviour's Followers, enforced the Doctrines of their Lord, not from the distant Relations of others, but from the more immediate Dictates of his Mouth, whence by a sacred and certain Tradition they have been handed to these times. From hence in the Times of Obscurity and most subtle Heresy, we are secure in the Establishment of our Faith, and plentifully furnished with Arguments and Instructions against the most plausible Errors. From our Saviour's more immediate Example, we learn Humility and Meekness, who, tho' the Son of God, condescended to the vile Condition of Humanity. From him we learn Patience in Adversity, and Equanimity in the most elevated State of Life: And whatever Blemishes by the Corruptions of Nature may stain our Profession, his Word is our Rule and Guide to set us right again, and restore Religion to its primitive Purity. For this reason our blessed Lord expressly calls himself the Light of the World; of which his holy Gospel is the happy Vehicle to convey it to Mankind, which till his Incarnation sat in Darkness. And hence the royal Prophet *Isaiah*, foretelling the Coming of our Saviour, says, "The People that walked in Darkness have seen a great Light; they that dwelt in the Land of the Shadow of Death, upon them hath the Light shined, *Isa.* 9. 2." Which is literally completed in the Deliverance of the World by Christ, thro' the Preaching of the Gospel.

From the Precellence therefore of the Gospel's conveying this Light to us, the Scriptures of the New Testament have acquired such Reverence and Veneration, that the Masters of the World, in the earliest Ages of the Church, thought them worthy their highest Care and Esteem. *Constantine the Great* had the Gospels bound up in a Cover of Gold, set with most valuable Jewels. *Theodosius* the Emperor transcribed the
Gospels

Gospels with his own Hand, and spent good part of every Night in reading them. The General Councils of *Nice*, *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*, placed the Book of the Gospels in the midst of their Assemblies, as *Nicephorus* tells us, *l.* 4. *c.* 3. that the holy Fathers might have respect to them as to the Person of Christ. And *St. Cyril* of *Alexandria*, who lived in the Beginning of the fifth Century, tells us, It was by synodical Sanction ordained, that in all solemn Attestations they were to lay their Hand on the Book of the Gospels, and invoke the Help of God in the holy Gospel. Which Solemnity is continued to this Day, when any one is obliged to take an Oath. Nor was this only observ'd among the Orthodox, but when, thro' Neglect of Discipline and the Depravity of Morals, Error crept into the Church, the Hereticks themselves paid the same respect to the Gospels, who, tho' they expunged some Books out of the Canon of Scripture, mutilated and depraved others, never offered by any sacrilegious Attempt to touch or violate the Gospels; [not but that several whimsical Innovators have topt upon the World ridiculous Pseudo-Gospels:] Nay, in so great an Esteem were the Gospels among the Heathens, that *St. Augustin* affirms, *de Civitate Dei*, *l.* 10. *c.* 29. he had seen the Beginning of *St. John's* Gospel among the Writings of the *Platonists*. So that the Theologists of all Ages have deservedly, and with a general Consent, styled this Part of Holy Scripture most necessary and useful. And truly, if we have respect to the Subject-Matter, Author, and Method or Manner of them, we shall see those Epithets justly appropriated to the Writings of the *New Testament*, and particularly to the Gospels.

As for the Subject-Matter, it is God himself; whether we respect him as God or Man: For the Gospels describe to us the Words and Acts of Christ our Lord, by which he taught us to believe and do our Duty, and what Methods we ought to take to obtain eternal Happiness, plentifully furnishing us from his own Mouth

with divine Precepts and Counsel, instructing us in the Perfection of a Christian Life, explaining to us Faith, Hope, Charity, the Doctrine of the Trinity, Institution of the Sacraments, and in general, all Theological Subjects; painting Virtue to us in its most amiable Aspect, and describing Vice in its most horrid Appearance and Consequence. So that St. *Jerom* very aptly calls the Gospels, the *Compendium* of Theology, and of Christian Life and Learning.

The Author is no less than the divine Wisdom, who chiefly both speaks and acts in the most material and grand Occurrences of the Gospel: For before, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says, *Ch. i. v. 1, 2.* “ God “ formerly spake to our Fathers by the Prophets, but “ in these latter Days by his Son, whom he hath made “ Heir of all Things, and by whom he made the World.” So that not *Moses* or the Prophets, but the only begotten Son of God, hath by the divine Mind of the Father discovered to us the Secrets of the eternal Wisdom, and communicated them to us in the Holy Gospels. In which those sacred Mysteries, concealed from ancient Times, and barely shadowed out in the typical Expressions of the Law and the Prophets, are plainly discovered.

The Method or Manner of speaking and reasoning in the Holy Gospels is admirable, especially in those Parts wherein it is symbolical; for the Elegancy of the Metaphors, the Aptness of the Similitudes, and Significancy of the Parables are so charming, that the Son of God, like a Celestial *Proteus*, in this Variety of Address is very instructing. One while he compares himself to a King, celebrating the Nuptials of his Son; another while to a great Man calling his Servant to an Account; now to a General waging War, then to a Master of a Family, a Husband-man, a Shepherd, a Fisher-man, a Merchant, an Usurer, &c. In all which the Comparisons are so proper, that he represents himself to our Capacities, not so much by Words, as by the Things themselves; so that in the Gospel we may
be

be said to be instructed as much by the Acts, as Words of Christ: And truly, as St. *Gregory* says, Every Action of Christ is our Instruction. But the Method of the Evangelical Wisdom claims another Excellency: For it is so disposed by the Holy Ghost, that the most simple and ignorant are not destitute of Advantage in the reading it; and at the same time there are Difficulties and Obscurities enough to exercise the Genius of the most sublime Wit. It is indeed plain and easy to the Sincere, Humble, and Willing; but to the Confident, Proud, and Lazy, difficult and obscure. “I thank thee,” says our blessed Lord, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these Things from the Wise, and Men of Understanding, and hast revealed them to Babes, *Mat. 11. 25.*” In short, the Gospel in respect of the rest of the Scriptures, is like the Sun that communicates Light to the Planets, who at their best shine but with borrowed Rays. So does the Gospel impart Light to the Writings of the Apostles, all those Works are but as so many Comments upon it. But the Excellence of the Gospel will yet appear more conspicuous, if we draw a Parallel betwixt it and the Law.

1. The Author of the Law was *Moses*, mere Man; but the Author of the Gospel was Jesus Christ, both God and Man. The Law indeed was ordained by the Ministry of Angels in the Hand of a Mediator, who was *Moses*, the Mediator between God and the *Israelites*; but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulged the Gospel with his own Mouth. The Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *Ch. 1. v. 2, &c.* sets out the Disparity between Christ and *Moses* very elegantly: “Christ being the Brightness of Glory, and the engraved Form of God’s Person, and sustaining all Things by his mighty Word, &c. sitteth at the right Hand of the Majesty on high; and is made so much more excellent than the Angels, in as much as he hath obtained a more excellent Name than they: For unto

“ which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art
 “ my Son, this Day have I begotten thee?” And to
 shew how much inferior *Moses* was to Christ, *Ch. 3.*
v. 3. “ He is counted worthy of greater Glory than
 “ *Moses*, as the Builder of a House is more honoured
 “ than the House.” And *v. 5, 6.* “ *Moses* truly was
 “ faithful in all his House as a Servant, for a Witness
 “ of those Things which should be done hereafter; but
 “ Christ is as the Son of God in his own House.” The
 Angels indeed, as ministring Spirits, were the first
 Publishers of the Gospel, as in the Messages of *Gabriel*
 the Archangel to the Virgin *Mary*, and to *Zacharias*
 the Father of *St. John Baptist*; but Christ himself was
 the Founder of it: Wherefore he cloathed his Divinity
 with our Flesh, thro’ which he dictated to us the
 Words of his Gospel. “ The Law, says *St. John*,
 “ *Ch. 1. v. 17.* was given by *Moses*, but Grace and
 “ Truth came by Jesus Christ.” So that all Autho-
 rities both of the *Old* and *New Testament* do agree,
 that Christ being the Author of the Gospel, it is justly
 intituled his Gospel, and may not be improperly called,
 the Book, Philosophy, and Theology of Christ, in
 which with his own Mouth he declared much more
 noble and sublime Truths than *Moses* and the Prophets.
 Wherefore when we read or hear the Holy Gospel, we
 may be said to read or hear the very express Word of
 the Son of God himself; which Thought, in the most
 early Ages of Christianity, created such an Awe and
 Reverence in all the Faithful, that when the Gospel
 was read in the Church, the whole Congregation rose
 up in a profound respect to it.

But to carry the Parallel yet higher, and in conse-
 quence of what hath been said, the Doctrine of the
 Gospel far exceeds what we find in *Moses* and the Law.
 The Law proposes one God to be believed and wor-
 shipped by us; but the Gospel, one God in Essence,
 and three in Person to be loved and adored: “ Go,
 “ says our Lord, and teach all Nations, baptizing them
 “ in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
 “ *Mat.*

“ *Mat. 28. 19.*” In the Law and the Prophets there is sometimes a Shadow of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity ; from whence the famous *Egyptian* Theologist *Trismegistus* is thought by some to have extracted that Oracle of his, *A Unit begat a Unit, &c.* But he could not penetrate into the Truth of this Mystery. And in Imitation of him the *Platonists* contaminated this Mystery by an Error not unlike that of the *Arians* afterwards ; for they, determining that there was one supreme God, did soon introduce other Gods, less and inferior to the supreme God. The Prophets obscurely and at a great distance foretold the Birth, Life, Passion and Ascension of Christ, the Mission of the Holy Ghost, the Recovery and Conversion of the *Gentiles* : But the Gospel positively and clearly lays down for Truth the Prescience, Providence, Predestination, Omnipotence, immense Charity, and other Attributes of God. “ No Man hath seen God at any time, but “ the only begotten, who is in the Bosom of the Fa- “ ther, hath declared him,” saith St. *John, Ch. 1. v. 18.* That is, Christ leaving his immortal State for a-while, condescended to the Condition of vile Mortality, that he might discover to us the Secrets of his Father, which were known to him only. Wherefore St. *Paul* in his Instructions to *Timothy, Epist. 1. c. 3. v. 16.* says, “ Great is the Mystery of Godliness ; God is manifest- “ ed in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of An- “ gels, preached to the World, and received up into “ Glory.”

Moreover, the Law is as the Shadow ; but the Gospel the Body, and very Truth it self. Thus the Acts of the Patriarchs, the Oracles and symbolical Visions of the Prophets, the Sacrifices, Ceremonies and Decrees of the Law, which received their Sanctions by the Blood of Animals, were Types and Preludes which enigmatically represented Christ to the People : But the Gospel manifestly and clearly exhibits to us Christ, his Mysteries and Sacraments. This St. *Paul, 2 Cor. 3. 18.* positively affirms, “ We behold the Glory of the “ Lord

“ Lord with an open Face, and are changed into the
 “ same Image, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit
 “ of the Lord.” And in confirmation of this, the
 same Apostle begins his Epistle to the *Romans* thus :
 “ *Paul* a Servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an
 “ Apostle, set apart to preach the Gospel of God,
 “ which he had promised before by his Prophets in the
 “ Holy Scriptures concerning his Son, &c.”

2. The Law was a Messenger of Fear and Terror ;
 but the Gospel of Love and Peace. The one threaten-
 ing Death to the Transgressors, the other Rewards to
 Believers. By the Law all were Servants, but by the
 Gospel all are Freemen and Children. So *St. Paul*,
2 Cor. 3. 6. “ God hath made us able Ministers of
 “ the *New Testament*, not of the Letter but of the Spi-
 “ rit ; for the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life.
 “ For if the Ministration of Death, (that is, the Law
 “ threatening Death) written with Letters, and in
 “ Stones, was glorious, &c. how shall not the Mi-
 “ nistration of the Spirit be more glorious ?” From
 whence we may justly define the Gospel a Law of Li-
 berty, a Law of the Spirit, a Law of Beneficence and
 Charity : For Christ went about doing Good, and
 healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God
 was with him. *Acts* 10. 38.

3. The Promises of the Law were temporary and
 momentaneous, subject to Vicissitude and Failing ; but
 the Gospel-Promises are celestial and eternal. In the
 Law were promised the good Things of the Earth, as
 Plenty of Oil, Wine, Honey, Cattle, &c. but in the
 Gospel the Vision and Enjoyment of God, and ever-
 lasting Happiness. *Joshua* conducted the *Israelites* to a
 Land flowing with Milk and Honey, but it was to the
 Land of the Dying ; Christ hath brought us into the
 Land of the Living, a Land shining with and abound-
 ing in Grace and Glory. Besides, the Law was more
 burdensome than the Gospel in respect of its threefold
 Division

Division into Moral, Ceremonial, and Judicial, many Parts of which decreed Death to the Transgressors of them : But the Obligations the Gospel laid upon the Professors of it were easy and pleasant ; “ Come to me, “ says our blessed Saviour, all you that are weary and “ laden, and I will give you Rest ; take my Yoke on “ you, and learn of me, for I am meek and humble in “ Heart ; for my Yoke is easy, and my Burden is “ light. *Mat. 11. 28, 29, 30, &c.*”

4. The Law was an Introduction to Christ and the Gospel ; but the Gospel is the Boundary and End of the Law ; as *St. Paul* tells us, *Rom. 10. 4.* “ Christ is “ the End of the Law for Righteousness, to every one “ that believeth.” Wherefore *St. Bernard* very aptly calls Christ the Fruit of the Promises of the Law, alluding to the seminal Virtue of Plants ; for Fruit, says he, *Hom. 1.* is the End to which Seeds tend, and in which they terminate.

5. But the Precellence of the Gospel will yet appear much greater, if we consider the Imperfection of the Law, which was limited to the *Jews* only ; but the Gospel diffusive over all the World, as *Isaiab* affirms, *Ch. 49. v. 6.* “ Behold I have given thee for “ a Light to the *Gentiles*, that thou may’st be my Sal- “ vation to the End of the World.” The Law was likewise imperfect in respect of its Duration ; for it was only temporary, being to continue no longer than the Coming of the Gospel, at which time it was to cease, which the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *Ch. 7. v. 18, &c.* expressly affirms, “ The Commandment that went be- “ fore is nulled, because of its Weakness and Unpro- “ fitableness ; for the Law made nothing perfect, but “ the bringing in of a better Hope, by which we draw “ near unto God, &c. but this is made with an Oath “ by him that said, Thou art a Priest for ever after the “ Order of *Melchisedec*.” Indeed, if we consider the whole Texture and Composing of the Gospel, we shall find

find it neatly contriv'd, and exactly adapted to all Ages and Sexes, to all Degrees and Conditions, and may justly be called an universal Library of Wisdom and Knowledge, wherein every one may see their Duty, and learn to put it in practice. And truly, if we examine our Saviour's Conduct whilst on Earth, we shall plainly see his whole Life was one continued Series of Moral Discipline; and that what he taught to others, himself practised, enforcing his Precepts by his own Example. Whilst the World greedily gaped after the pernicious Bait of Wealth, he studiously affected Poverty. Whilst others ambitiously aspired to Honour and Empire, he declined a Kingdom. Impatient Man could brook no Affront, but he sustained the vilest Reproach. Corporal Pains were terrible to Humane Nature, yet he bore Whipping and Scourging. Nothing so shocking to poor Mortality as the bare Apprehension of its Dissolution, yet he submitted to the most ignominious Death, that of the Cross.

But besides the Imperfections of the Law already mention'd, *St. Paul* in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, *Ch. 4. v. 3, &c.* shews us farther, "That when we
" were Children, we were under the Elements of the
" World; but when the Fulness of Time was come,
" God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, and under the Law, that he might redeem them that were
" under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons." And *St. Cyril, l. 9. in Joan.* says, "It was necessary that *Moses* should instruct *Israel* as
" a Child in their State of ignorant Infancy; but by
" Christ, who is the sacred Repository of Wisdom, we
" arrive at the most true and consummate Knowledge"

But there is nothing so much discovers the Imperfections and Deficiencies of the Law, as the Holy Jesus himself does in that admirable Parallel between the *Old Testament* and the *New*, *Mat. 5. 21, &c. to the End*: Where he sets both in a true Light, shewing the Necessity of reforming and improving some Decrees of the Law, and instituting a better and more useful

useful System of Virtue and Piety. The Precepts of the Law are positive, yet conformable to Nature; but the Commands of the Gospel transcend Nature, and are far more instructing, as furnishing us with wholesom Counsel and prudent Admonitions: “A new Com-
 “mandment I give unto you, says our Blessed Saviour,
 “that ye love one another, as I have loved you, *John*
 “13. 34.” And if we address ourselves as we ought to the Practice of that System of Evangelical Theology in the fifth Chapter of *St. Matthew*, we may from thence draw such demonstrable Inferences as will direct us in the Performance of our Duty, and crown our Obedience with Rewards. Thus from the Beatitudes in the Beginning of this Chapter we are assur’d from our blessed Lord’s own Mouth, That if we are poor in Spirit, we shall gain the Kingdom of Heaven; if we mourn here, we shall be comforted; if we are meek, we shall possess the Earth; if we hunger and thirst after Righteousness, we shall be satisfied; if we are merciful, we shall receive Mercy: And so of the rest. For this Reason *St. Augustin*, in *Serm.* 112. says, “The
 “Happiness of this Life consists in the Holy Gospel,
 “and the rest of the sacred Records, without which
 “we cannot come to the Knowledge of God.” Certainly all true Knowledge, Virtue and Perfection, that a Christian can desire or attain to, are contain’d within those Pages; in which Christ teaches us that Righteousness and Holiness consist in the inward Purity and Integrity of Mind, not in the outward Shew of Works; in a Conscience void of Offence, not in the pompous Applause of Men; in Humility, not in Ostentation; in Contempt, not Pursuit of Honour. He teaches us not to resist the Evil-one, but to love our Enemies as well as our Friends. And what *Socrates*, what *Aristotle*, what *Plato*, ever taught or understood these Lessons? The best of them were but Men, and sometimes insnared with the Follies they had condemn’d, and broke thro’ those Rules they had prescribed to others.

6. The Law proposed a naked Precept to the Understanding of Man ; but the Gospel, at the same time that it instructs, inspires his Will with Grace to perform what is commanded him : For Christ, who in his Gospel speaks to us, does not express himself externally to our Ears, but internally to our Minds, where by his persuasive Spirit he inclines us to believe and practise what he teaches. “ My Words, says he, are “ Spirit and Life,” *John* 6. 63. And to this purpose the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, c. 10. v. 16. cites the Prophet *Jeremy*, c. 31. v. 33. “ This is the Testa-
“ ment that I will make unto them after those Days,
“ saith the Lord, I will put my Laws into their Hearts,
“ and in their Minds I will write them.” So that when we read the Gospel, Christ speaks to us ; and when we pray, we talk to Christ.

After all these Excellencies of the Gospels, and the Preference deservedly given them to all other sacred Writings, there can be no Motive so pressing to incite us to the Study of them, as their own Worth ; and next that, our Interest, which we cannot be said more really to pursue, than by a strict and religious Observation of the Duties contained in them. But it is time to draw to a Period. Having therefore gone thro’ the *Antithesis* between the *Old Testament* and the *New*, we will conclude with the same between the Authors of them ; in which we shall see, that there is as much Difference between the Authors as the Works.

Moses being the express Index and Type of Christ, is said to have enlighten’d the *Jews* under the Dispensation of the Old Law, as Jesus Christ did the Christians under the *Gospel*. *Moses* was Legislator of the *Pentateuch*, Christ of the *Gospel*. *Moses* had two Congresses with God ; the first when he received the first Tables from God in *Mount Sinai*, the other when he receiv’d the second Tables, at which time he return’d with his Face shining. So was Christ honour’d with the same Testimony by his Father ; first at his Baptism, when

when the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and a Voice was heard saying, “ This is my beloved Son.” The second was at his Transfiguration on *Mount Tabor*, when *Moses* and *Elias* (that is, the Law and the Prophets) testified of him. *Moses* did great Wonders in the Land of *Egypt*; but Christ wrought greater, and more Miracles in *Judea*. *Moses* spoke to God in a Cloud, and saw him behind; but Christ had seen him Face to Face. God told *Moses*, he had found Favour in his Sight; but to Christ he said, “ Thou art my “ Son.”

But to pursue this *Antithesis* more regularly, we will follow *Eusebius*’s Method; who, *l. 3. de Demonstr. Evangel.* begins thus:

Moses was Legislator of the *Jewish* Nation; Christ of the whole World.

Moses purged the *Israelites* from their Idolatry; Christ wherever he came did so.

Moses by Signs and Wonders gave the Law; Christ confirmed the Gospel with greater.

Moses delivered only his own People from Bondage; but Christ set the whole World at liberty.

Moses promised to the *Israelites* a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; Christ provided a Kingdom abounding with eternal Plenty.

Moses, when but a new-born Infant, was designed to be murdered by *Pharaoh*, who had condemned all the male Children of the *Jews*; but Christ, whilst an Infant, and adored by the Wise Men, was forced to fly into *Egypt* from the Cruelty of *Herod*, who intended to have killed all the male Children that were not above two Years old.

Moses in his Youth was well skilled in all manner of Learning in use among the *Egyptians*; Christ at twelve Years of Age was found in the Temple disputing with the Learned, who were surprized at his great Knowledge.

Moses fasted forty Days in the Company of God in the Mount; Christ was in the Wilderness forty Days without

out eating or drinking, in divine Contemplation of God.

Moses in the Defart miraculously fed the People with Manna and Quails : Christ more effectually satisfied five thousand hungry Souls with five Loaves.

Moses passed thro' the Waters of the *Red Sea* unhurt ; but Christ walked upon the Waters of the Sea.

Moses by holding out his Rod divided the Sea ; Christ with a Word rebuked the Sea, and presently produced a Calm.

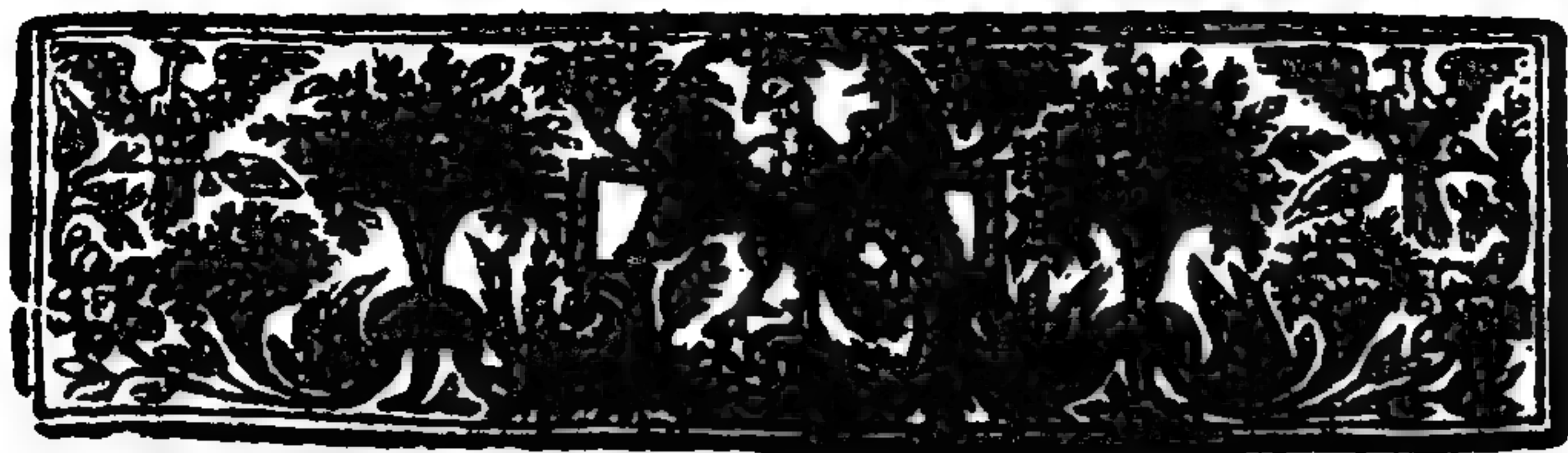
The *Israelites* by reason of the dazzling Lustre of *Moses's* Face could not look upon it ; Christ's Disciples were so terrified at the Magnificence of his Transfiguration, that they fell on their Faces.

Moses restored leproûs *Miriam* to her former State of Health ; but Christ out of his Mercy absolved penitent *Magdalen* from all her Sins.

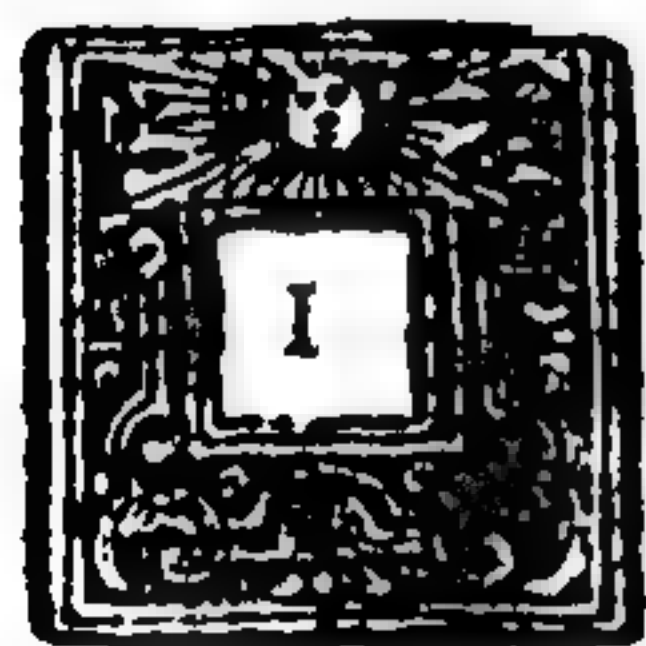
Moses chose out twelve Spies to view and observe the promised Land ; Christ chose twelve Disciples.

Moses chose seventy Elders to assist in the Administration ; Christ commissioned seventy Disciples to preach the Gospel.

Of *Moses* it is said, That no Man to this present Time knows where his Sepulchre is ; of Christ the Angels bore witness, “ Ye seek Jesus that was crucified ; “ he is risen, he is not here.”



THE
P R O E M
TO THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
Four ^(a) *Gospels.*



I will not be improper to premise some Account of the Writers of this History ; which, tho' written by four several Persons, and at four different Times and Places, carrying so exact an Harmony throughout the whole Narration, plainly evinces that none but Men inspir'd with the Holy Ghost could so punctually agree in their Writings. We will begin with *St. Matthew*, who is first in Order.

(a) *Gospels.* Gospel is a *Saxon* Word ; *Gos* with them signifying *Good* as well as *God*, and *Spel* signifies a *Word* ; So that the Word agrees exactly with the *Greek* Word *Euangelion*, which signifies *good News* or *good Ti-*

dings. In this Place it signifies that Blessed Story of the Birth, Life, Actions, Precepts and Promises, Death and Resurrection of Christ, on which, of all the Stories in the World, we Christians ought to look with Joy.

[*Vol. 3.*]

B

St. Mat-

St. *Matthew*, called also *Levi*, was born at *Nazareth*, a City in the Tribe of *Zebulun*. He was the Son of *Alpheus* and *Mary*, Sister or Kinswoman to the Blessed Virgin, both originally descended of the Tribe of *Issachar*. His Trade, or Way of Life, was that of a Publican, or Toll-gatherer, to the *Romans*, an Office of bad Report among the *Jews*, tho' among the *Romans* it was accounted a Place of Power and Credit, not ordinarily conferr'd upon any but *Roman* Knights. This Office was render'd very odious to the *Jews*, by the Covetousness and Extortion of the Collectors, who having farm'd the Customs of the *Romans*, they must gripe and scrape, by all Methods of Extortion, to pay their Rent, and gain some Advantage to themselves: Of which, doubtless, *Zacheus*, the Chief of these Farmers, was sensible, when, after his Conversion, he offer'd a four-fold Restitution to any Man, from whom he had taken any Thing by Fraud or evil Arts.

Of this Trade and Office was St. *Matthew*, which, it seems, more particularly consisted in gathering the Customs of Commodities that came by the Sea of *Galilee*, and the Tribute which Passengers were wont to pay that went by Water. For this Purpose they kept their Office, or Custom-house, by the Sea-side, that they might be always near at hand. And here it was, as St. *Mark* intimates, that *Matthew* had his Toll-Booth, where he sat at the Receipt of Custom, when our Lord espied him, and called him to follow him. The Man was rich, had a wealthy and gainful Trade, wise and prudent, and understood, no doubt, what it would cost him to comply with this new Imployment, that he must exchange Wealth for Poverty, a Custom-House for a Prison, gainful Masters for a naked and despised Saviour. But he overlooked these Considerations, left all his Interests and Relations, to become Christ's Disciple, to embrace a more spiritual Way of Traffick and Commerce.

After his Election to the Apostolate, he continued with the rest till our Lord's Ascension; and then, for
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the first eight Years at least, preached in and about *Judea*. Little Certainty can be had what Travels he underwent, for the Advancement of the Christian Faith; so irrecoverably is Truth lost in a Crowd of Legendary Stories. *Æthiopia* is generally assigned as the Province of his Apostolical Ministry, where, it is most probable, that he suffered Martyrdom in a City called *Naddabar*, but by what Kind of Death is uncertain.

St. *Matthew* wrote his Gospel at the Intreaty of the *Jewish* Converts, and Command of the Apostles, while he was yet in *Palestine*, about eight Years after the Death of Christ: Which, notwithstanding the Opinion of *Nicephorus*, *Irenæus*, &c. to the contrary, carries a great Force of Probability still, from its being written before the Dispersion of the Apostles; for St. *Bartholomew* took it with him when he travell'd into *India*, where it was afterwards found by *Pantæus*, amongst some that yet retained the Knowledge of Christ. As to the Language, he undoubtedly wrote it in *Hebrew*, as primarily designing it for the Use of his Countrymen. It was very likely soon after translated into *Greek*, tho' by whom not certainly known; some saying St. *John*, others St. *James* the Less, translated it. But it matters not much by which of them it was done, since the Apostles approv'd the Version, and that the Church has ever receiv'd the *Greek* Copy for authentick.

Tho' the Name of St. *Mark* carries something of *Roman* in it, which, upon some Change or Accident of his Life, he might probably assume, yet he was certainly born of *Jewish* Parents, originally descended of the Tribe of *Levi*, and the Line of the Priesthood. By the Antients he was generally supposed to have been one of the Seventy Disciples. He was converted by some of the Apostles, and probably by St. *Peter*, whose constant Attendant he was in his Travels, supplying the Place of an *Amanuensis* and an Interpreter: For though the Apostles were divinely inspir'd, and

among other miraculous Powers, had the Gift of Languages conferred upon them, yet was the Interpretation of Tongues a Gift more peculiar to some than others. This might probably be *St. Mark's* Talent, in expounding *St. Peter's* Discourses, either by Word or Writing, to those who understood not the Language wherein they were delivered.

He accompanied *St. Peter* in his Apostolical Progress, preached the Gospel in *Italy*, and at *Rome*; and was by *St. Peter* sent into *Egypt* to plant Christianity in those Parts, fixing his Residence at *Alexandria*, and the Places thereabouts. Nor did he confine his Preaching to *Alexandria*, and the Oriental Parts of *Egypt*, but removed Westward to the Parts of *Lybia*, going thro' the Countries of *Marmarica*, *Pentapolis*, and others thereabouts; where tho' the People were both barbarous in their Manners, and idolatrous in their Worship, yet by his Preaching and Miracles he made way for the Entertainment of the Gospel, and left them not till he had not only gained them to, but confirmed them in the Profession of it.

Returning to *Alexandria* he preached freely, and ordered and disposed the Affairs of the Church, and wisely provided for the Succession, by constituting Governors and Pastors in it. But the restless Enemy of the Souls of Men would not long suffer him to be quiet: It was the Time of *Easter*, when the great Solemnities of *Serapis* happen'd to be celebrated; at which Festival the Minds of the People being excited to a passionate Vindication of the Honour of their Idol, broke in upon *St. Mark*, then engaged in the solemn Celebration of Divine Worship, and binding his Feet with Cords, dragged him thro' the Streets and most cragged Places, to a Precipice near the Sea; and for that Night thrust him into Prison, where his Soul was by a Divine Vision encouraged under the Ruins of his shatter'd Body. Early the next Morning the Tragedy began again, they dragging him about in the same Manner, till his Flesh being raked off, and his Veins emptied

emptied of Blood, his Spirits failed, and he expired. As to his Person, he was of a middle Size, his Nose long, his Eye-Brows turning back, his Eyes graceful and amiable, his Head bald, his Beard long and grey, his Gait quick, and the Constitution of his Body strong and healthful. His Gospel, the only Book he left behind him, was written at the Intreaty of the Converts at *Rome*, who not being content with hearing *Peter* preach, pressed *St. Mark*, his Disciple, that he would commit to Writing an historical Account of what he had delivered to them; which he performed with no less Faithfulness than Brevity: All which *St. Peter* perused, ratified with his Authority, and commanded to be publickly read in their religious Assemblies. Some Dispute has been made in what Language this Gospel was written, whether in *Latin* or *Greek*. The Advocates of the *Romish* Church plead, that it's very congruous and suitable that it should at first be consigned to Writing in that Language, being principally designed for the Use of Christians at *Rome*: An Objection which easily vanishes, if we consider, that as the Convert *Jews* there understood very little *Latin*, so there were very few *Romans* that did not understand *Greek*, which, as the Writers of that Age make appear, was the genteel and fashionable Language of those Times. The Original *Greek* Copy, written with *St. Mark's* own Hand, is said to be extant at *Venice* at this Day; written, as they tell us, by him at *Aquileia*, and thence after many Centuries of Years translated to *Venice*, where it is still preserved; tho' the Letters are so worn out with Length of Time, that they are not capable of being read. The Story indeed is not easily to be disproved, nor is it reasonable to be readily credited, and therefore I think it not worth insisting on.

Antioch was the Birth-place of *St. Luke*, a City eminent above all others in *Syria*, for its pleasant Situation, fertile Soil, Riches and Trade, Wisdom and Learning of its great Men, the Civility and Politeness of

its Inhabitants; and yet above all these, renowned for this one peculiar Honour, that here it was that the Disciples were first call'd Christians. Being an University well stock'd with learned Professors of all Arts and Sciences, St. *Luke* could not miss of a liberal and ingenuous Education, his natural Parts meeting with the Advantage of great Improvements. Nor did he only study at *Antioch*, but in all the Schools of *Greece* and *Egypt*, whereby he became accomplished in all Parts of Learning. He applied himself particularly to the Study of Physick, for which the *Greek* Academies were most famous. Besides his Abilities in Physick, he is said to have been very skilful in Painting; though *Gretser* the Jesuit's Tradition does not at all prove him to be the Author of some Pieces which are said to be his. As to understanding this Art, nothing makes more for it than an antient Inscription found in a Vault near the Church of St. *Mary*, in the *Via lata* at *Rome*, supposed to have been the Place where St. *Paul* dwelt, wherein mention is made of a Picture of the Blessed Virgin, *UNA EX SEPTEM AB LUCA DEPICTIS*; being one of the seven painted by St. *Luke*.

It is most probable that he was converted by St. *Paul*, during his Abode at *Antioch*; after which he became his inseparable Companion and Fellow-Labourer in the Ministry of the Gospel, especially after his going into *Macedonia*, from which Time in recording the History of St. *Paul*'s Travels he always speaks of himself in his own Person, *Acts* 16. 10. He follow'd him in all his Dangers, was with him at several Arraignments at *Jerusalem*, accompanied him in his desperate Voyage to *Rome*, where he still attended on him to serve his Necessities, and supply those ministerial Offices which the Apostle's Confinement would not suffer him to undergo, and especially in carrying Messages to the Churches wherein he had planted Christianity. This infinitely endear'd him to St. *Paul*, who owned him for his Fellow-Labourer, called him
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the *Beloved Physician*, and *the Brother whose Praise is in the Gospel*, throughout all the Churches.

The Antients are not very well agreed either about the Time or Manner of his Death: But *Nazianzen* and others expressly assert his Martyrdom, of which *Nicephorus* gives this particular Account; That coming into *Greece* he successfully preached, and baptized many Converts into the Christian Faith, till a Party of Infidels making Head against him, drew him to Execution, and for want of a Cross whereon to dispatch him presently, hang'd him upon an Olive-Tree, in the Eightieth Year of his Age. His Body afterwards, by the Command of *Constantine*, or his Son *Constantius*, was solemnly removed to *Constantinople*, and buried in the great Church built to the Memory of the Apostles.

As to the Books which *St. Luke* wrote for the Use of the Church, they are two; his *Gospel* and *History of the Apostles Acts*, both which he dedicated to *Theophilus*. The Antients differ very much about this *Theophilus*, some supposing it to be a feigned Name, denoting no more than a *Lover of God*, a Title common to every good Christian; while others, with better Reason, conclude it the proper Name of a particular Person, especially since the Style of *Most Excellent* is attributed to him, the usual Form of Address to Princes and great Men: But even they that agree in this, cannot determine positively who he was. It is most probable he was some Magistrate, whom *St. Luke* had converted and baptized, to whom he now dedicated these Books, not only as a Testimony of honourable Respect, but as a Means of giving him farther Certainty and Assurance of those Things wherein he had been instructed by him. For this *Gospel*, *St. Jerom* supposes it to have been written in *Achaia*, during his Travels with *St. Paul* in those Parts, of whose Help he is generally said to have made use in the Composing it. But whatever Assistance *St. Paul* might contribute towards it, we are sure this Evangelist him-

self tells us, That he derived his Intelligence from those *who from the Beginning had been Eye-Witnesses and Ministers of the Word*, Luke 1. 2. Nor does it in the least detract from the Authority of his Relations, that he himself was not present at the doing of them; for, if we consider who they were from whom he derived his Accounts of them, he had a Stock both of Credit and Intelligence sufficiently authentick to proceed upon, delivering nothing in his whole History, but what he had immediately received from Persons present at, and concerned in the Things which he has left upon Record.

As to the *History of the Apostolick Acts*, the Reader is desired to consult the *Proem* before them in their proper Place.

St. *John*, tho' the last in Order, yet first in Quality, of the Evangelists, was by Birth a *Galilean*, the Son of *Zebedee* and *Salome*, younger Brother to St. *James*, with whom he was brought up in the Trade of Fishing. The Nobility of his Family, which some attribute to him, seems not reconcileable with the Meanness of his Father's Trade, and the Privacy of his Fortunes. As to his Acquaintance with the High-Priest, *Nicephorus's* Relation seems most probable; That he had sold his Estate left by his Father in *Galilee* to *Annas* the High-Priest, and therewith purchased a fair House at *Jerusalem*, about *Mount Sion*, whence he became acquainted with him. Before his Coming to Christ, he seems for some Time to have been a Disciple to *John the Baptist*, being probably that other Disciple that was with *Andrew*, when they left the *Baptist* to follow our Saviour; so particularly does he relate all Circumstances of that Transaction, tho' modestly, as in other Parts of his Gospel, concealing his own Name. He was at the same Time with his Brother called by our Lord both to the Discipleship and Apostolate; by much the youngest of all the Apostles, which his great Age seems to evince, living near Seventy Years after our Saviour's Suffering.

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The sacred Story says little more of him than what is recorded of him in Conjunction with his Brother *James*. He was peculiarly dear to his Lord and Master, being treated by him with more Familiarity and Freedom than the rest. And indeed he was not only one of the three, to whom our Saviour communicated the private Passages of his Life, but had some Instances of a more particular Kindness and Favour conferr'd upon him: Witness his lying in our Lord's Bosom at the Paschal Supper; it being the Custom of those Times to lie along at Meals upon Couches, so that the second lay with his Head in the Bosom of him that was before him; which Honour was not given to any of the aged, but reserved for this young Apostle. And besides other Notes of Distinction in his Lifetime, our Blessed Lord, by his last Will and Testament on the Cross, made him Guardian of his own Mother, the Blessed Virgin, bequeathing her to his Care, *John* 19. 26, 27.

Upon the Division of Provinces, which the Apostles made among themselves, *Asia* fell to St. *John's* Share; tho' it is not probable that he did presently enter upon his Charge, but that he dwelt still in his own House at *Jerusalem*, at least till the Death of the Blessed Virgin, which was about fifteen Years after our Lord's Ascension. Some Time after her Death he took his Journey into *Asia*, and industriously applied himself to propagate Christianity, preaching where the Gospel had not yet taken Place, and confirming it where it was already planted; St. *Paul* having before made several Journeys into, and resided in those Parts. Many Churches of Note and Eminency were of his Foundation, *Smyrna*, *Pergamus*, *Tbyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea*, and others; but his chief Place of Residence was *Ephesus*, where St. *Paul* had many Years before settled a Church, and constituted *Timothy* Bishop of it.

After several Years spent in this Employment, he was at length accus'd to *Domitian*, who had begun a Persecution

cution against the Christians, as an eminent Asserter of Atheism and Impiety, and a public Subverter of the Religion of the Empire. By his Command the Proconsul of *Asia* sent him bound to *Rome*, where he was cast into a Caldron of Oil set on Fire: But Divine Providence preserved him from this seemingly unavoidable Destruction. The cruel Emperor not convinced or satisfied with this, orders him to be banish'd, and transported to *Patmos*, a disconsolate Island in the *Archipelago*, where he remained several Years, instructing the Inhabitants in the Faith of Christ.

Domitian, whose prodigious Wickedness had render'd him infamous and burdensome to the World, being taken out of the way, *Cocceius Nerva* succeeded to the Empire, a prudent Man, and of a more mild and sober Temper. He rescinded the odious Acts of his Predecessor, and by a publick Edict recall'd those whom the Fury of *Domitian* had banished. St. *John* taking the Advantage of this general Indulgence, left *Patmos*, and return'd to his antient Charge in *Asia*, but chiefly fix'd his Seat at *Ephesus*, the Care and Presidency of which (*Timothy* their Bishop having been lately martyr'd by the People) he took upon him, and by the Assistance of seven Bishops he governed that large Diocess, erecting Oratories (not large Churches in the modern Notion) and ordering and disposing the Clergy as Circumstances then required. He lived till the Time of *Trajan*, about the Beginning of whose Reign he departed this Life, very aged, being in the ninety-eighth or ninety-ninth Year of his Life. There are many improbable Opinions and Conjectures about the Manner of his Death, most of which, relating to his dying a violent Death, are very frivolous and trifling: The most probable is, That he died a natural Death, in a good old Age.

He was indefatigable in the Execution of his Charge, which he expressed in the mighty Care he shewed to the Souls of Men, unweariedly spending himself in the Service of the Gospel, travelling from East to West to instruct

instruct the World in the Principles of that holy Religion which he was sent to propagate, shunning no Difficulties or Dangers to redeem Mens Minds from Error and Idolatry, and reduce them from a vitious Life. He was a vigilant and courageous Champion against Hereticks, countermining their Artifices, and antidoting all against their poisonous Errors.

The last Instance of this Apostle's Care for the Good of the Church, is the Writings which he left to Posterity ; of which the first in Time, though placed last, is his Book of *Revelations* : Concerning which let the Reader be pleased to consult the *Proem* in their proper Place.

St. *John* wrote his Gospel after his Return from *Patmos* to *Ephesus*, at the Intreaty and Solicitation of the *Asian* Bishops, and Ambassadors from several Churches. In order to which he caused them to proclaim a Fast, to seek the Blessing of Heaven on so great and solemn and Undertaking ; which being done he set about it. Two Things chiefly contributed to the writing of it ; the one to obviate the Heresies of those Times, especially of *Ebion* and *Cerintus*, who denied Christ's Divinity ; the other, that he might supply those Passages of the Evangelical History which the rest of the sacred Writers had omitted. Besides these he wrote three Epistles ; the first of which is Catholick, or general, calculated for all Times and Places, containing most excellent Rules for the Conduct of Christian Life, pressing to Holiness and Purity of Manners, and arming Men against the Insinuations of Seducers, especially the *Gnosticks*, to whom St. *John* had a particular Respect in this Epistle. It was universally received, and never questioned by any. The other two Epistles are but short, and directed to particular Persons, the one a Lady of honourable Quality ; the other the charitable and hospitable *Gaius*, the kind Friend and courteous Entertainer of indigent Christians. The Epistles were not of old admitted into the Canon, nor are owned by the Church in *Syria* to this Day, being by
many

many ascribed to the younger *John*, Disciple to our Apostle. But there is no just Cause to question who was the Author, since both the Doctrine, Phrase, and Design of them do sufficiently challenge our Apostle for the Author of them.

St. *John* wrote his Works in *Greek*: But his Gospel was afterwards translated into *Hebrew*, and kept by the *Jews* among their secret Archives and Records in their Treasury at *Tiberias*, where a Copy of it was found by one *Joseph* a *Jew*, afterwards converted, and whom *Constantine the Great* advanced to the Honour of a Count of the Empire; who breaking open the Treasury, tho' he missed of Money, found Books beyond all Treasure, St. *Matthew's* and St. *John's Gospels*, and the *Acts of the Apostles* in *Hebrew*, the reading of which greatly contributed to his Conversion.

Thus much of each Evangelist in particular: That which is generally observable of the Writings of these four excellent Persons is this; That the three first of them wrote the whole Story from the Birth of Christ, till after the Resurrection; but two of them more largely, St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; the third (St. *Mark*) more succinctly setting down the Series of the Actions rather than the Sermons and Passages delivered by him. And tho' none of them agree throughout in observing the Order and Succession of Things which they relate, yet two of them do agree much more constantly than the third with either of them, viz. St. *Matthew* an Apostle and Eye-Witness, and St. *Mark* from St. *Peter*, who also was an Apostle and an Eye-Witness: But the third, St. *Luke*, who wrote his Story from Collections that he had from others, and compiled it himself, hath not so exactly observed the Order wherein the Things were done, but only set down the Things themselves. And tho' he sometimes varied from the others in some Words or Circumstances, (as when St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark* say it was a *Maid* that spake to St. *Peter*, he reads, *another Man*, and the like), they are so inconsiderable, and of so little Importance to the main Mat-
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ters of Faith, and Doctrines of the Gospel, that they are rather Arguments to demonstrate that these Writings were not contrived by any Compact or Agreement of one with another, but each of them a-part, without consulting or knowing what the other had done ; which is a Circumstance that was necessary to make their Testimonies several, and so to give them the greater Authority from the Number of them. As to the fourth Evangelist, *St. John*, his Writings seem to have been designed to these two Ends : 1. To demonstrate and declare the Divinity and eternal Pre-existence of Christ, his Creation of the World, with other sublime and mysterious Things ; as the other three had set down his Humanity, and cleared the Matter of his Conception and Birth of the Blessed Virgin. 2. To add out of his own Knowledge some remarkable Things, (especially those which tended most to the Divinity of Christ) which had been omitted by the other three : To which Purpose he saw it necessary to set down the Story of Christ's Passion and Resurrection as the others had done, that so he might affix those other Circumstances which he design'd to add to them.

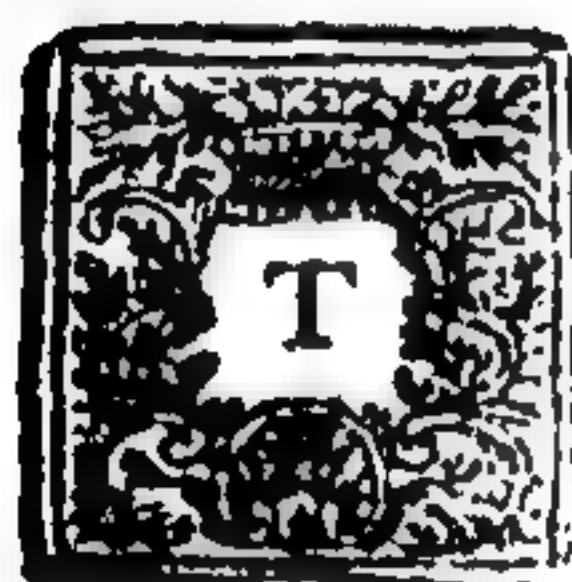
There are some that find fault with his Style, as being often mix'd with Barbarisms, and Phrases used in an uncommon Sense, making his Writings less grateful to the Critical and Curious. But whatever there was wanting in the Politeness and Elegance of his Style, was abundantly made up in the Zeal of his Temper, and the Excellency and Sublimity of his Matter ; so that as *St. Basil* and *Epiphanius* assert of him, he spake and wrote like a Son of Thunder.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
FOUR GOSPELS.

VOL. III. BOOK I.

Of the Birth and Infancy of (a) Jesus Christ.



THE Time was now approaching, when the great Creator of the World intending to recover Mankind from their fallen State, in which the Sin of their first Parents in Paradise had involv'd them, resolv'd to perform the (b) Covenant he there made with them, by sending his Son to redeem them.

(a) *Jesus Christ.* Jesus was the proper Name of the Word made Flesh, and given by God himself, *Mat. 1. 21. Luke 1. 31, & 2. 21.* Not that it was a Name strange or unusual at that Time, but more emphatically given him as Saviour of the World; the Reason of which is by the heavenly Ambassador subjoined in *Matthew 1. 21. For he shall save his People from their Sins.*

Christ is a Name of Dignity, signify-

ing his Office as *Messiah*, or Anointed; for under the old Law, Kings, Priests, and Prophets, were anointed, *1 Sam. 10. 1. 1 Kings 1. 39. Levit. 8. 12. 1 Kings 19. 16.* And that this was a Name peculiar to the expected *Messiah* of the Jews, is evident from the High-Priest's calling him, *Καὶ ἔρχεν, That Christ,* *Mat. 26. 63. Mark 14. 61. Luke 22. 67.*

(b) See *Genesis 3. 15.*

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In pursuance therefore of this, and for the Completion of many other Promises, which he by his holy Prophets from the Beginning had made them, he first sends his (c) Harbinger to prepare the Way before the Saviour of the World, who was now about to make his publick Entry into it.

And to make the Fulfilling of these Prophecies more wonderful, and becoming the Hand of an Almighty Power, the Conception and Birth of *John Baptist*, the Fore-runner of Christ, was introduced with a stupendous Miracle: God hereby not only denoting his Omnipotence, which is not always circumscrib'd within the scanty Bounds of Nature, but at the same Time exciting the Minds of Men to an Expectance of something extraordinary from such preternatural Means.

In the Reign of *Herod*, King of *Judea*, lived a certain Priest named *Zacharias*, and his Wife *Elizabeth*; both of the Tribe of *Levi*, but by a peculiar Descent; he being of the Lot of (d) *Abiab*, which was the eighth according to the Division of *David*, and she lineally descended from the Daughters of *Aaron*. Nor was their Character inferior to the Excellency of their Extraction, being (e) just before God, and unblameable in their Conversation. Yet hitherto God had blessed them with no Issue, and being both far advanced in Years, they had now no Reason to hope for, or expect any. But the Peculiarity of their Descent, and the Innocence of their Life, were sufficient to recommend them to the particular Care and Love of God, who contrary to all the seeming Improbabilities of Nature, had determin'd to make them Instruments of his Glory, by exercising on them his Omnipotence in an extraordinary Manner.

At the Time when *Zacharias* was to officiate in his Course, and to burn Incense in the Temple, the Angel

(c) See *Iſa.* 40. 3. *Mal.* 3. 1.

(d) *1 Chron.* 24. 10.

(e) *Luke* 1. 6.

Gabriel appear'd to him, standing on the (f) Right-side of the Altar. The Unusualness of the Sight struck *Zacharias* with Surprize and Fear, which the Angel soon dispell'd, by assuring him of the Favour he and his Wife had found with God ; who, notwithstanding their great Age and her Sterility, intended to bless them with a Son, whose Birth should be the Occasion of great Joy not only to them but many others ; foretelling at the same Time the Dignity of his Office, That being from his Birth inspir'd with the Holy Ghost, he should go before the Lord in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, to turn the Hearts of the Children of *Israel*, and make ready a People prepared for the Lord. *Zacharias*, by reason of his own and his Wife's great Age, questions the Truth of the Divine Message : But the Angel, to confirm the Authority of his Embassy, tells the diffident Priest, that he should be dumb till these Things were fulfilled ; which immediately prov'd true, for when he came out of the Temple he was speechless, and continued so till the Time of his Wife's Delivery.

Zacharias's Time of Waiting being expir'd, he returns Home, where soon after his Wife *Elizabeth* conceived, which for five Months she concealed, not that she doubted of the Promise God had made to her by the Angel, for she well knew her Husband's Incredulity was punish'd with Dumbness, but to avoid the (g) Rumours that her being with Child might occasion, whom the World, by reason of her great Age, might naturally suppose to be barren.

God having thus miraculously taken off from *Elizabeth* the Reproach of Barrenness in her Old-Age by

(f) *Right-side*, &c. This was by the Antients look'd upon as an Omen of Good : From whence *Bede* gives this Reason of the Angel's appearing on the Right-side of the Altar, *Because*, says he, *he foretold the Coming of the true Priest*, &c. Which carries the greater Probability with it, in that we find in

Mark 16. 5. the Angel who appeared to the Woman, and told them of the Resurrection of Christ, (which to them were glad Tidings) sat on the Right-side of the Sepulchre. See *Ezekiel* 10. 3.

(g) *Grot. Luc. Brug. Marlerat, &c.*

her Conception of the Baptist, the Birth of the *Messiah* is usher'd into the World by no less wonderful, but rather more extraordinary Means. For a Woman generally esteem'd barren, and in Years, to bear a Child was within the Verge of Possibility; sacred History affords Instances in the Birth of *Isaac* and *Sampson*: But that a Virgin, who had never known Man, should conceive and bear a Child, exceeded all natural Reason and Credibility, and could be nothing but the Product of divine Power. This the Almighty had (b) promised, and now most punctually performed; for within six Months after *Elizabeth* had conceived, the Angel *Gabriel*, who to her had been the happy Messenger of glad Tidings, is sent by God on the same Errand to a Virgin named *Mary*, a Cousin of *Elizabeth's* in *Nazareth*, a City of *Galilee*, who not long before was espoused to *Joseph*; and both of them were of the House of *David*. The Angel entering the House where she then was, (for as yet she was not brought home to her espoused Husband *Joseph*) salutes her with the Heavenly Benediction: (i) *Hail thou that art highly in Favour with God, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among Women.* The Strangeness of the Sight affected her with Amazement and Surprise; which *Gabriel* soon removes by assuring her of the Grace she had found with God, who had decreed her to be the Mother of the Saviour of the World.

The Holy Virgin, in confidence of her own Virtue, having hitherto lived in a strict State of Virginity, expostulates with the celestial Messenger the Possibility of the Cause of his Errand; which he makes clear to her, assuring her that the Holy Ghost by his Almighty Influence should cause her to conceive; and by her Cousin *Elizabeth's* miraculously being with Child in her Old-age, he convinces her of the Omnipotence of God, with whom (k) nothing was impossible. The

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Blessed

(b) *Isa.* 7. 14. (i) *Luke* 1. 28.(k) *Nothing.* The Vulgar Latin translates it *Verd*, because the GreekTerm *Lagos* does often signify so; but since it answers to the Hebrew Word *Debar*, which is very equivocal, and signifies

Blessed Virgin humbly acquiesces to the Reasons of the Divine Visitor : Upon which he leaves her, and she with eager Haste repairs to *Hebron*, where her Cousin *Elizabeth* dwelt, not out of any Distrust of the Angel's Report, but that she might not neglect the Opportunity of increasing her Faith, which God had so miraculously offer'd, and the Angel had dictated to her. Being arriv'd at *Zacharias's* House, she had no sooner saluted *Elizabeth*, but the Babe sprang for Joy ; not the Motion usual in Childrens quickening, for that Time was now past, *Elizabeth* being in the sixth Month of her Time, but a Motion preternatural, as adapt to such Divine Operations.

In this Visit and Salutation of the Virgin *Mary* to *Elizabeth*, we may see a most exact Harmony, and which can no where be found or expected, but in such prodigious Transactions. *Elizabeth* had no sooner received the Blessed Virgin's Compliment, but, being influenc'd by the Holy Ghost, in return accosts her with the very Words the Angel *Gabriel* had saluted her in, *Blessed art thou among Women* ; and as if she had been acquainted with the whole Conversation between the Angel and her Virgin Cousin, she foresheweth her being with Child of the *Messiah*, and calls her the (1) Mother of her Lord.

This was a most complete and demonstrable Confirmation of all that the Angel had foretold her, and to the Knowledge of which *Elizabeth* could no way come but by Divine Inspiration : Which so transports the Blessed Virgin, that in a heavenly Ecstasy she glorifies God, by recollecting his Mercies, and the Promises he had made his People *Israel*, and which by making her the blessed Instrument, he was now about to fulfil.

Having tarried about three Months with her Cousin, she returns Home ; soon after which *Elizabeth*,

nifies sometimes a *Word*, sometimes a cation according to the Matter which
'*Thing*, sometimes a *Reason*, &c. we is spoken of.
must necessarily determine its Signifi- (1) *Luke* 1, 43.

ST LUKE CHAP. I.

2

Mary enters y^e house of Zacharias and salueth Elizabeth.



ST LUKE 1 Verse 41. 18.

And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: etc.

according to the Time foretold her, was delivered of a Son, whom, on the eighth Day at his Circumcision, to the Amazement of their Friends and Kindred, the Father named *John*, tho' none of their Family bore that Name before. Hereupon good old *Zachary*, seeing the Finger of God so manifestly appear according to the Predictions relating to his Family, burst into a holy Rapture; the same Power that at first had miraculously tied up his Tongue, did now as wonderfully let it loose, to give Praise to the Almighty God that had wrought such Prodigies among them.

And now the Time was at hand, when the great Joy that the Birth of the Baptist had occasion'd should be augmented by the more miraculous Birth of the Saviour of Mankind, which was to be the perfect Completion of what the Angel *Gabriel* had promised to both their Mothers. The Holy Virgin therefore being returned from *Hebron* to *Nazareth*, *Joseph* prepares to consummate his Marriage with his espoused Wife; when to his great Amazement she was big with Child. Tho' the seeming Disappointment deeply affected him, yet being of a (*m*) gentle Disposition, he was unwilling to expose the Honour of the Family, which he mistakenly thought she had stain'd, or her to inevitable Death, according to the Sentence of the Law: And therefore the better to conceal the Disgrace of the Family, as he thought, he resolves to divorce her

(*m*) *Gentle or Merciful, &c.* This in our Translation is render'd *Just*, *Mat. 1. 19.* When we meet with equivocal Terms we must take them in the Sense which comes nearest to the Design of the Subject that is treated of. This Rule has not been so strictly observed by our Translators as it ought, as in these Notes we shall frequently shew, particularly here, where the Versions express the Character that is given to *Joseph*, and other good Men, by the Word *Just*, *Mat. 1. 19. Acts 10. 22.* The Term in the Original has that Signification; but it is also certain, that the Words which signify *Just and Justice*

in the *Hebrew*, do likewise often signify *Merciful and Mercy.* The Design therefore of the Author who employs them, determines their Signification. It cannot then be said, that St. *Matthew* design'd to represent *Joseph* as a Man that observed the most exact Rules of Justice, since upon that Occasion, according to the Law, instead of putting the Blessed Virgin away, he should have made her a public Example, and had her stoned to Death, *Deut. 22. 23.* The Word therefore should not have been render'd by that of *Just*, but by that of *Humane or Merciful*, as St. *Chrysostom* has remark'd.

privately. But while he labour'd under these anxious Deliberations, an Angel of God appeared to him in a Dream, and with this comfortable Message dispels his uneasy Cares: *Fear not, Joseph, thou Son of David, to take Mary thy Wife; for she is innocent, and that which she has conceived is of the Holy Ghost, by the Virtue and Power of the most High: And she shall bring forth a Son, whose Name by the heavenly Decree is to be called Jesus, who shall free Mankind from the Slavery of Sin and Death.* Joseph awaking, acknowledges the heavenly Vision; and in obedience to the Divine Command, takes the sacred Virgin home, with whom to outward Appearance he lived in Conjugal Love, though he knew her not (n) till she was delivered of her * *First-born Son*; which soon after came to pass in as wonderful manner as had been predicted.

In

(n) Till, *Mat. 1. 25.* That is, he never knew her. The Word *till* implying as if he knew her after the Birth of Jesus, is of no Force to the contrary, as may appear in *1 Sam. 15. 35.* where it is said, *Samuel saw Saul no more until the Day of his Death, &c.* that is, He never saw him more; the Word *till* having no Relation to the Time after, but before the Birth. This, it is likely, might occasion that Error of supposing *James* and *Josis*, and *Simon* and *Jude*, to be the Brethren of our Lord, born of *Mary* after the Birth of our Saviour; for it is plain they were his first Cousins. See *Ezek. 44. 2. 2.*

* The Word *First-born* is ambiguous: For, 1st, Sometimes it signifies one that is *first-born*, without respect to any following Children, as when Christ is called the *first-born* of *Mary*, in *Mat. 1. 25.* 2^{dly}, Sometimes it signifies the *eldest* of two or more Brethren, as when the Scripture calls *Eliab* the *first-born* of *Jesse*, *1 Sam. 17. 13.* 3^{dly}, This Word is taken figuratively to signify *those we love dearly*, because Parents very often love their *First-born* best; as is plain in the Example of *Isaac* with respect to *Esau*, and of *Joseph* to *Mary*: And God

himself calls the *Israelites* the *First-born* in several Places of Scripture, which, to avoid Ambiguity, ought to be translated, *That God did give to the Israelites Marks of the most tender Affection.* 4^{thly}, The *First-born* in Scripture-language signifies that which is most remarkable either for Greatness and Excellency, or Meanness and Want; as when God calls the *Ephraimites* his *First-born*, and when *Moses* prophesies of the Tribe of *Joseph*, That his Glory should be like the *Firstlings* of his *Bullocks*; that is, equal in Strength to the strongest of those Animals. So God promises to *David*, or *Solomon*, to make him the *First-born* of the *Kings of the Earth*; whereas, in respect to their Birth, both were younger Brothers of their Family. On the contrary, when the Scripture speaks of extreme Misery or Want, it expresses them by the *First-born of the Dead*, and the *First-born of the Poor*; that is to say, Persons exposed to the most cruel Death, and to the highest Poverty; as the *Jesus*, who understand their own Language better than we, do acknowledge.

Therefore when this Expression is used in the *New Testament*, it ought to be referred to its proper Signification,

ST LUKE CHAP. I.

3

The Circumcision of the son of Zacharias.



ST LUKE I. Verse 63.

20.

And he asked for a writing Table, & wrote, saying, his name is John. And they marvelled all.

S^T LUKE CHAP. II.

Christ's Nativity.



S^T LUKE 2. Verse 7. 21.

She brought forth her first born Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room

In the Time of *Augustus Cæsar* a (o) Decree was issued forth to take an Account of the Estates of all Countries and People subject to the *Roman* Empire; and *Cyrenius* being Governor of *Syria*, (under which Province *Palestine* was) he was to (p) enroll that Part of the Empire. Whereupon every one repairs to his own City to have his Name taken, and his Goods rated, that the Emperor might know the Wealth of every Country, City, and Family. In this critical Juncture it was that *Mary*, the espoused Wife of *Joseph*, tho' very near her Time, was obliged to accompany her Husband *Joseph* to *Bethlehem* to be enrolled; where, by the singular Appointment of God, the sacred Virgin brought forth her First-born in a Stable, the vilest Part of the Inn, and most remote from Help at such a Time: Which undoubtedly did very much enhance the Miracle, her Delivery being as wonderful as her (q) Conception; no natural Husband contributing to one, any more than a Midwife did to the other.

to remove its Ambiguity. This Method would have prevented many Errors. For Example: If instead of calling our Saviour the *First-born Son of Mary*, they had called him her Son, St. *Jerom* had not been so much put to it to answer *Helvidius*, who from this Phrase took occasion to maintain that the Virgin had other Children besides our Saviour; and *Helvidius* had had no Followers. If instead of calling our Saviour the *First-born of many Brethren*, Rom. 8. 29. the *First-born of all the Creatures*, Col. 1. 15. and the *First-born of God*, Heb. 1. 6. they had translated, That he is the most August or most Glorious of many Brethren, the most excellent or the most Favoured of all Creatures, the most dearly beloved Son of God; *Arius* and his Followers had never imagined that Christ was the First of all the Creatures, and the Church had been free from all the Disorders into which it fell upon this Account. If when he is called in the Original the *First-begotten of the Dead*, Rev. 1. 5. they had render'd, that he is the Sovereign or most illustrious of

the Dead, there would be no need of such long Commentaries upon this Expression, as the most learned Divines do acknowledge. See the Note above at the Letter (n).

(o) *Luke* 2. 1.

(p) *Enroll*. This was not an exacting of Tribute or Taxation, but a setting-down or enrolling every Person according to their Family and Estate: According to which the *Vulgar Latin* expresses *ἀπογραφὴν ποιεῖν*, by *Profiteri*, *Luke* 2. 3. they went to tell what they were worth, which was in order to be taxed.

(q) *Conception*. It was always the Opinion of the Church, (saith Bishop Taylor) from the Days of *Gregory Nazianzen*, and until now piously observed, That as there was no Sin in the Conception, so neither had the Virgin Pains in the Production: For to her alone the Punishment of *Eve* did not extend, That in Sorrow she should bring forth. And therefore where nothing of Sin was an Ingredient, there Misery could not co-habit.

Tho' the Birth of our Saviour, in all outward Appearance, was in the most mean abject Manner, and seemingly unbecoming the Majesty of Heaven; yet there were several extraordinary Circumstances and Occurrences then attending it, which plainly bespoke him the Son of God. He was no sooner born but a Messenger from Heaven proclaimed it to the World, and in the Field of *Bethlehem* astonished and rejoiced the (r) Shepherds with the happy News of the Birth of (s) Christ the Lord, born in the City of *David*, directing them to the Place where he was laid; and immediately after the celestial Choir welcome him into the World with this harmonious Serenade, *Glory be to God on high, Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men.*

The Shepherds filled with Joy and Wonder at this strange and glorious Sight, hasten to *Bethlehem* to see the Truth of these Things; where they no sooner arrive but they see the Virgin-Mother, and *Joseph* the supposed Father, attending the God-like Babe in the Manger, whom in humble Reverence they adore, and in awful Silence admire the Goodness of God: And when they had gratified their glad Eyes with these miraculous Transactions, joyfully disperse the News in most amazing Circumstances among their Neighbours, which alike affected all that heard them.

Seven Days being expired after the Birth of our Saviour, he is circumcised on the eighth Day, as the Law appointed, and named *Jesus*, which Name was foretold his Mother before he was conceived; and therefore it was not to be look'd upon as a Name given him by human Opinion or Intention, or the Will of his Parents, but by divine Authority, he being long before decreed to be the Saviour of the World, which his Name implies.

(r) *Shepherds.* The Angel's Moral in the Circumstance of his Address to the poor Shepherds of *Bethlehem* is, That none are fit to come to Christ but those who are poor in Spirit, Despisers of the World, and simple in their Thoughts, without secular Design or

Craft; and therefore the Angel did not apply to *Herod*, nor to the Scribes and Pharisees, whose Ambition had Ends contrary to the Simplicity and Poverty of the Birth of Jesus.

(s) *Luke 2. 17. & 14.* See the Note above on the Word *Nothing*, Page 17.

ST MATTHEW CHAP. II. ⁵

Then Herod when he had privily call'd y^e wise men.



ST MATTHEW 2. Verse - .8. ²³.

*Enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethle-
hem, and said, go, and search diligently etc.*

Tho' the People in the Place of his Birth seem'd to take little Notice of him, and that hitherto none but poor Shepherds by the Revelation of Heaven had paid any Acknowledgment to him ; yet to denote his high Birth, and to witness his Divinity, a (*t*) Star appeared in the *East*, which mov'd the Curiosity of three (*v*) Wise Men to travel to *Jerusalem* to worship him. This soon alarms (*w*) *Herod* ; whose Title hanging but loose about him, immediately affects him with Jealousy, and puts him upon the inquiring into the Matter. To be farther satisfied in it, he calls a Synod of the Chief Priests and Scribes, and demands of them where Christ should be born ; who tell him at *Bethlehem* in *Judea*, according to what the Prophet *Micah*, Ch. 5. v. 2. had foretold, *And thou Bethlehem,*

(*t*) *Star*. This Word signifies an extraordinary Star appearing in the Heaven, observed by the *Magi* to differ from the ordinary Stars, and some Way interpreted to them to be the Index or Finger to point out this miraculous Birth.

(*v*) *Wise Men*. The *Greek* Word *Magoi*, signifies not only those we commonly call Magicians, *i. e.* Sorcerers, but also Philosophers, Divines, &c. learned Men, Students of the liberal Sciences, especially of Astronomy, without any ill Character upon them. These were then famous among the *Persians*, and were then both their Kings and Priests, and so among other Nations also, but especially the *Eastern*. The Time of these Wise Mens coming is not distinctly known, but may from Circumstances be concluded not to be the twelfth Day from the Nativity ; for St. *Matthew* 2. 13. says, That after the Wise Mens Departure the Angel appeared to *Joseph*, and dispatched them into *Egypt*, which could not be before *Mary's* Purification ; for then St. *Luke* says, 2. 22. they went up to *Jerusalem*, which cannot be supposed after their going into *Egypt*, nor betwixt the Departure of the *Magi* and their going thither, for that had been to throw themselves into *Herod's* Hands at *Jerusalem*, which they were commanded to

avoid by going into *Egypt*. From *Jerusalem* therefore they return'd to *Bethlehem*, and dwelt there till the Coming and Departure of the *Magi* : And therefore the Tradition, which makes the *Epiphany* the twelfth Day from the Day of the Nativity, may mean it of that Time Twelve-month ; according to which it is, that, upon exact inquiring the Time of the Star's appearing, *Herod*, *Mat.* 2. 16. appoints the killing of all the Children from two Years old, and under ; which probably he would not have done, if they had told him that the Star appeared but few Days before.

(*w*) *Herod*. Having by Fraud usurped the Kingdom of *Judea*, he endeavours to maintain his ill-gotten Title by the Murder of the lawful Heirs. The first of whom was *Hircanus* the High-Priest. Secondly, *Aristobulus*, Nephew of *Hircanus*, and High Priest. Thirdly, *Mariamne* his Wife, and Daughter of *Hircanus*. Fourthly, *Alexandra*, the Mother of *Mariamne*. Fifthly, *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*, his Sons by *Mariamne*. Sixthly, *Antipater*, his Son by another Wife. These were his wicked Reasons for murdering the Innocents, among whom he hoped Christ would have fallen, who now seem'd his only surviving Competitor.

which art part of the Portion of Land assigned to the Tribe of Judah, though thou wert one of the least Cities of Judah, yet now art thou the most honourable; for in thee shall be born a Ruler, who shall govern my People Israel.

This was so far from giving *Herod* any Satisfaction, that it rather inflam'd and increas'd his Jealousy, which Fox like he conceals; for calling for the Wise Men privately, he examines them strictly about the Appearance of the Star, and pretends to send them to *Bethlehem* in quest of the Child, that when they had discovered where he was, they should intimate the same to him, that he might come and pay Adoration to him. But God disappoints *Herod's* insidious Treachery. The Wise Men make to *Bethlehem*, the Star which they had before seen in the *East* being their Guide, which went before them till they came to the Place where the Son of God resided. Into whose Presence being introduced, they pay him the most solemn Adoration and Reverence, and present him with the richest Product of their Country, Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh.

The Wise Men having perform'd their congratulatory Embassy in this solemn Manner, prepare to return to *Jerusalem*, to acquaint *Herod* with the happy Discovery they had made: But God, whose infinite Wisdom and all-searching Eye foresaw the Wickedness and Insincerity of *Herod*, who had no other Design by sending these three Wise Men to find out the Babe but to destroy him, in a Vision admonishes them not to acquaint *Herod* with what they had seen, but to return home to their Country another Way.

After the Circumcision of the Holy Infant, the next Ceremonies to be performed, according to the Custom of the Law, were the Purification of the Virgin-Mother, and the Presentation of her First-born; which Solemnities were to be performed forty Days after the Nativity, publickly in the Temple, by reason of the Offering to be made there: Which in pursuance of the Law is done, the Holy Virgin humbly submitting

ST MATTHEW CHAP. II. 6
 The Wifemen are warn'd of GOD in a Dream,



ST MATTHEW 2. Verse 12. 25.

*• And being warn'd of God in a dream that
 they should not return to Herod, they de-
 parted into their own country another way.*

ting to the Law, which injoin'd Women in general to purify themselves, tho' she had no need of it, her Blessed Son, who was Purity itself, having submitted to that of Circumcision. After so divine and miraculous a Birth, which render'd her most pure, she went to the Temple with the sacred Infant to present him to the Lord, who in a wonderful Manner still continues to evince to the World his sending his Son to redeem it : For in the great Concourse of People that attended the Ceremonies there appeared two Persons eminent for Piety and good Life, who, being urg'd by the divine Impulse of the Spirit, came to give illustrious Testimony of their Saviour. Old *Simeon*, a Man just before God, and who waited for the Consolation of *Israel*, having God's Promise that he should not depart this Life before he had seen the Lord's Anointed, when thro' the Light of his Faith he had discovered this God hid under the Meanness of human Infancy, and saw thus accomplish'd the Promise which God had made him, transported with an holy Joy, takes the Blessed Infant in his Arms, and in a heavenly Ecstasy sings his *Nunc dimittis*, praising God for the Completion of his Promises, in letting him live to see the Saviour of the World, before he quitted it. And whilst the Holy Virgin and the rest of this pious Assembly joyfully admired what this good old Man spake, an holy and reverend Widow, named *Anna*, came likewise into the Temple, and added her publick Praises and Acknowledgment to those which good old *Simeon* had already given our Saviour. Her exemplary Life gave Authority to what she said ; for after seven Years Marriage she had past all the rest of her Life to her eighty fourth Year in Acts of Piety and Devotion, praying and fasting continually, and constantly frequenting the Temple at the accustomed Hours of performing those Duties. The Eminency of her Character made a deep Impression on all that heard her affirming this Holy Infant to be the *Messias*, sent into the World for the Redemption of *Israel*.

These

These Ceremonies thus perform'd in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, they return home to *Betlehem*, where they dwelt till after the Coming and Departure of the Wise Men in all seeming Security, nursing the holy Babe, not in the least suspecting the wicked Designs or Attempts of any Enemy. But the Eye of Providence was more watchful: God, who knew the Insincerity of *Herod's* Heart, resolves to disappoint him, and sends an Angel to *Joseph*, to warn him of the approaching Danger that threaten'd the blessed Innocent; tells him of *Herod's* intended Cruelty to destroy the Child, commands him to retire into *Egypt* with him and his Mother, and to remain there till he should direct him farther. *Joseph*, who before this had been acquainted with the Divine Visitation, disputes not the Celestial Message, but in a dutiful Obedience to God, and Fear for his sacred Charge, immediately prepares for their Escape; and taking the Advantage of the Night to prevent Discovery, travels to *Egypt*, where these holy Pilgrims remain secure under the Protection of Heaven.

• *Herod* having long and impatiently expected the Return of the Wise Men, at last finds himself deluded by them: To revenge which Disappointment he impiously resolves to gratify and secure himself another Way, intending such a Scene of Blood as he vainly thought Providence should not be able to prevent, but inevitably determine this young King's Reign, whom his Jealousy suggested was come to supplant him in his ill-gotten Dominion. No less than a general (x) Massacre of all the Male-Children in *Betlehem*, and the Country around to two Years old, will glut this Monster's Cruelty, thinking it impossible in so universal a Slaughter that any could escape his Vultur-Claws. Thus he resolv'd, but Heaven had otherwise

(x) This Execution was in the Beginning of the second Year after Christ's Nativity, as in all Probability we may guess; not at the two Years End, as

some suppose. The Number of Children slain at this Time is said to be 14000.

ST MATTHEW CHAP. II. 7

The angel of y^e Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.



ST MATTHEW 2. Verse 13. 26.

*Saying. arise, take the young child & his
mother. and flee into Egypt. and be thou there
until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek
the young child to destroy him.*

decreed ; for by this Time the intended Prey was out of his Reach, and safe under the Wings of Providence.

Herod is not long in putting his bloody Resolution in Practice : Guilt and Malice soon furnishing him with Instruments suitable to his cruel Purpose, whom he disperses in all Parts to execute his bloody Commands, and without Pity or Distinction murder all the Male Children not above two Years old. Then was wofully verified the Prophecy of *Jeremy*, Ch. 31. v. 15. (y) *Rachel weeping for her Children, and would not be comforted.* The Shrieks of tender Mothers for their mangled Babes, and the Groans of expiring Infants fill the Skies : Death and remediless Despair rage in every Place, and the Surface of the Earth is crimson'd with innocent Blood.

During these bloody Transactions God had provided a Sanctuary in *Egypt* for the holy Child Jesus, a Chain of (z) Prophecies exactly concurring in every minute Particular, as had been foretold some Centuries before, and most agreeably and properly accom-

(y) This Part of *Jeremy's* Prophecy was spoken figuratively of the Captivity of *Babylon*, and the Slaughter at *Jerusalem*, long after *Rachel's* Death, who is here, tho' long before dead, said to lament ; and so also it hath here a second Completion in this Slaughter of the Infants : And *Rachel*, the Mother of *Benjamin*, of which Tribe, with that of *Judab*, the *Jews* were chiefly composed, is likewise here figuratively brought in lamenting the Slaughter, as of her Children, and that the more because she was buried there, *Gen.* 35. 19.

(z) *St. Matthew*, Ch. 2. v. 25. alludes to that Speech of *Hosea*, 11. 1. *Out of Egypt have I called my Son :* Which had one Accomplishment in the People of *Israel's* being carried into, and fetched out of *Egypt*, and was now again fulfilled in this true promised Seed of *Abraham*, that is, in Christ, (of whom *Israel*, called God's First-born,

was a Type) and in him, now that he was a Child, as it was said in *Hosea*. And to this Purpose it may be consider'd, how fitly *Joseph* was a Type of Christ, as he is represented to us in the History of his Flight into, and Return from *Egypt* : For as *Joseph* was by his Brethren sold into *Egypt*, so is Christ by the Persecution of *Herod* driven thither : As *Joseph* was separated from his Brethren, and cast out from among them, so was Christ for Fear of *Archelaus* separated from his own Tribe of *Judab*, and constrained to dwell in *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, whose Name may denote that Flight or Separation ; and may likewise signify an afflicted humbled Person, which may be applicable to Christ's being brought up in *Nazareth* ; a vile Place (*Can any Good come out of Nazareth ?*) and so a special Part of Christ's Humiliation to live there.

modated to the Person of our Saviour, of whom several in *the Old Testament* had been Types.

The Holy Pilgrims having tarried near seven Years (as it is commonly believ'd) in *Egypt*, *Joseph* is assured by an Angel of the Death of *Herod*, and commanded to return to the Land of *Israel* with his Holy Charge.

He readily obeys the heavenly Vision, and returns : But hearing that *Archelaus* succeeded his Father in *Judea*, and fearing that the Cruelty and Ambition of *Herod* might be entail'd upon the Son ; and besides being warned of God in a Dream to turn aside into the Parts of *Galilee*, (which was of a distinct Jurisdiction, govern'd indeed by one of *Herod's* Sons, but not by *Archelaus*) he diverted thither : And there this Holy Family remained in the City of *Nazareth*.

From their Return out of *Egypt* to *Judea*, and their Habitation in *Nazareth*, till the Blessed Child Jesus was twelve Years of Age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentick Record but that they went to *Jerusalem* every Year at the Feast of the Passover ; which Opportunities of Religion, and publick Address to God in the Rites of Festivals and Solemnities of the Temple, they had been denied during their Peregrination in *Egypt*. But being return'd to their own Country, they again enjoy the Blessings of those holy Societies and Employments, of which they had been so long depriv'd. At the Feast therefore of the Passover, when Jesus was twelve Years old, and was in the holy City, attending upon the Patrial Rites and solemn Sacrifices of the Law, his Parents having fulfill'd their Days of Festivity, went homeward, supposing the Child had been in the Caravan among his Friends, and so they travell'd for the Space of a whole Day's Journey ; but when they sought him among their Kinsfolk and Acquaintance, and found him not, they returned to *Jerusalem* full of Fear and Sorrow. Who can express the uneasy Apprehensions and sad Tremblings of Heart which
then

then throng'd about the Holy Virgin-Mother, who was in Pain not only for the Loss of the Joy of her Family, but the Hopes of all the World? What did not uneasy Care at that Time suggest to her upon the apprehension of a Loss so vastly considerable? Possibly an Angel might have carried him she knew not whither; or it may be the Son of *Herod* might have gotten the Prey which his cruel Father had missed. Whilst she had spent some Time under these Anxieties of Mind in her sad and holy Pursuit of her lost Jewel, despairing of the prosperous Event of any human Diligence, she made her Address to God, the only Relief and Succour of distressed Minds; and entering into the Temple to pray, God that knew her Desires, prevented her with the Blessings of his Goodness, and her Sorrow was changed into Joy and Wonder: for there she found her Holy Son sitting in the midst of the Doctors, both hearing and asking them Questions.

The bare Sight of him soon obliterates their Care and Grief: But the glad Parents receive this Addition to their Joy, they find him illustrated with a Miracle; for when they saw him, they were amazed, and so were all that heard him, at his Understanding and Answers, beyond his Education and Experience, beyond his Years, and even the common Abilities and Capacities of the best Men, discoursing and disputing with the Learned up to the Height and Power of a Prophet, with the Brightness of an Angel, and the Infallibility of Inspiration itself.

The Virgin-Mother, tho' over-joy'd at the Sight of her lost Jewel, could not forbear expressing a gentle Correetion to him for the great Fright he had put her in, saying, *Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us?* Which he modestly excuses by giving this Account of himself; *Why should ye seek me? Knew ye not that I must be about my (a) Father's Business?* These Things

(a) *Father's Business.* The *Greek House*; so that it seems to refer to the renders this in *St. Luke, Ch. 2 v. 49.* Place where they found him, that is, *ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς.* In his Father's: in the Temple.

Joseph, and the rest understood not, but *Mary* laid them up in her Heart, well knowing it was Part of his Employment, and his Father's Business to be in his House, where she had found him. .

Being thus happily found by his Parents, he return'd with them to *Nazareth*, and was subject to them, where he liv'd in all Holiness and Humility, submitting to an Employment or Trade, which he undertook in Obedience to his supposed Father, and for the Support of that Holy Family, which was dear in the Eyes of God, tho' not splendid in the Opulency of a free and indulgent Fortune. He wrought in the Trade of a Carpenter; and when *Joseph* died, which happen'd before the Manifestation of Jesus unto *Israel*, he wrought alone, and was no more call'd the Carpenter's Son, but the Carpenter. Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of *Mary*? said his offended Countrymen, *Mark* 6. 3. And in this Condition did the Blessed Jesus abide till he was thirty Years old; for he that came to fulfil the Law would not suffer one Tittle of it to pass unaccomplish'd; for by the Law of the Nation, and Custom of the Religion, no Priest was to officiate, or Prophet to preach, before he was thirty Years of Age.

B O O K II.

Christ's Man's Estate.

Notwithstanding the mighty Draught of innocent Blood cruel *Herod* had drank in *Bethlehem*, his blood-thirsty Soul is not yet satiated, but seeks for more in the adjacent Parts: He hunts the Country round to glut his Cruelty, searching the highest Hills as well as the lowest Vales. But Providence, still watching over her own, timely withdrew *John* the Forerunner of the Saviour of the World from his rapacious Fury. *Elizabeth* hearing of the sad Havock *Herod's* Barbarity had made among the Infants in *Bethlehem*, thought her Holy Babe not secure among the Hills, but flies with him into the Wilderness, there in the desert Places and secret Recesses to conceal him from the cruel Tyrant's Rage, where she attended him with as much Care and Tenderneſs as the Affections and Fears of a Parent could expreſs in thoſe barren Solitudes. The Child was about eighteen Months old when his Mother firſt fled with him to Sanctuary: but after forty Days ſhe died; and his Father *Zachary*, at the Time of his (*b*) Miniſtration, which hap-

(*b*) *Miniſtration*. Every Rank or Courſe of Priests ſerved weekly in the Temple by Turns; which Courſe falling out by Lot, they did by Lot determine each particular Priest's Service, namely, who ſhould burn Incenſe, who ſhould ſlay the Beaſts, who lay them on the Altar, who dreſs the Lamps, &c. *Zacharias* was of the Courſe of *Abia*, *Luke* 1. 5. that is, of the eighth Courſe, and his Lot was to burn Incenſe, *Luke* 1. 9. As to the Death of *Zachary*, the Father of *John Baptiſt*, it is the Opinion of *St. Chryſoſtom*, *Peter Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and others, that it was he

that *Herod* ſlew between the Temple and the Altar, becauſe he reſuſed to betray his Son to him; eſpecially *Tertullian*, who reports it with this Circumſtance, That the Blood of *Zachary* had ſo beſmear'd the Stones of the Pavement where he was ſacrificed, that no Art or Industry could waſh it out, the Tincture being indelible. As if, becauſe God did intend to exact of that Nation all the Blood of the Righteous from *Abel* to *Zachary*, who was the laſt of the Martyrs of the Synagogue, he would leave a Character of their Guilt in their Eyes to upbraid their Infidelity and Cruelty.

pen'd

pen'd about this Time, was killed in the Court of the Temple, *Herod* resolving to revenge the Disappointment of murdering the Son on the Father : So that the Child was expos'd to all the Dangers and Infelicities of an Orphan, in a Place of Solitariness and Discomfort, and in a Time when a bloody Tyrant endeavoured his Destruction. But when his Father and Mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up : For, according to the Tradition of the *Greeks*, God deputed an Angel to be his Nourisher and Guardian, as he had formerly done to *Ismael* who dwelt in the Wilderness, and to *Elias* when he fled from the Rage of *Ahab* ; so to this Child, who came in the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, to demonstrate that there can be no want where God undertakes the Care and Provision.

The Entertainment that St. *John's* Proveditor-Angel gave him was such as the Wilderness did afford, and such as might dispose him to an austere Life ; where he spent his Time in Contemplation and Prayer, eating Locusts and wild Honey, and clothed not with soft, but a hairy Garment and a leathern Girdle, till the Time of his publick Appearance ; which was in the fifteenth Year of *Tiberius* the Emperor, *Pontius Pilate* being Governor of *Judea*, when the Word of God came to *John* in the Wilderness, from whence he departed, and went into all the Country about, preaching the Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins.

St. *John*, according to the Prophecies of him, and the Designation of his Person by the Holy Ghost, was the Forerunner of Christ, sent to prepare the Way for him, and to dispose the People for the Reception of him ; and therefore it was necessary he should in his Person appear eminent for Sanctity, and extraordinarily great in all the Occurrences and Circumstances of his Life, so as he might gain Credit to the Testimony he was to give concerning his Lord the Saviour of the World. And this the *Baptist's* Character most exactly answer'd ; for at his quitting the solitary Retire-
ments

ments of the Desert he seem'd what indeed he was, a rare and excellent Personage. The Contempt of the World, which he bore about him, his mortified Countenance and Deportment, his austere and eremetical Life, and his excellent Zeal and Spirit in preaching, created so great an Opinion of him among the People, that all held him for a Prophet, especially when by his Baptism he added a greater Solemnity to his Office. By this he so prevail'd, that he made fit Preparation for the Lord's appearing. And now it was that Multitudes throng'd from all Parts to hear the joyful News of Salvation from the Mouth of the Baptist: Cities and Towns are deserted and unpeopled, whilst the spacious Fields are crouded with their Inhabitants. *Jerusalem, Judea*, and all the Country about *Jordan*, press in to hear his Doctrine, which he delivers with great Force and Energy, severely reprehending the Pharisees and Sadducees, exhorting the People to Works of Mercy, the Publicans to decline Oppression, and to do Justice, the Soldiers to abstain from Plunder and Violence; and publishing that he was not the CHRIST, that he only baptized with Water, but that the *Messias* should baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire; and finally, denouncing Judgment and great Severities to all the World, if impenitent, even Abscission and Fire unquenchable, he prevails with them to confess their Sins, and be baptized. And this was the joyful Dawn of the Gospel, to which *St. John Baptist* was like the Morning Star, foretelling the Approach of the Sun of Righteousness, who was just coming to enlighten the World with his Presence.

The full Time being come, Jesus took leave of his Mother and his Trade, to begin his Heavenly Father's Work, and take upon him the Prophetical Office in order to the Redemption of the World. Now whilst *St. John* was baptizing the People in the River *Jordan*, Jesus came to him to be baptized of him: But the *Baptist*, who had never seen his Face before,

nor met him till now, being by the Holy Ghost inspired with a discerning Spirit, at his first Arrival knew him, and paid him Reverence ; for when Jesus desired to be baptized, *John* forbid him, saying, *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?* *John* wonder'd why the *Messias*, the Lamb of God, pure and without Spot, who needed not the Cleanings of Repentance, or the Washings of Baptism, should demand it, and of him a Sinner, and his Servant. But tho' he was no Sinner himself, yet was he made Sin for us ; and therefore it was proper enough for him to perform the Sacrament of Sinners, who was to undergo the Shame and Punishment of Sin for them. Accordingly therefore the Holy Jesus who came, as himself owns in his Answer to the Baptist's Question, to fulfil all Righteousness, would receive that Rite which his Father had instituted in order to the Manifestation of his Son.

John having by the Impulse of the Holy Spirit already distinguished the Saviour of the World, who offer'd himself to be baptized among the vast Crouds of People who came to the Banks of *Jordan* for that End, after a short Expostulation with him of his own Unworthiness, who ought rather to receive the Honour and Blessing of Baptism from his Saviour, than his Saviour from him, no longer disputes his Lord's Commands, but baptizes him. The Holy Baptist having perform'd his Ministry, the Heavens were open'd, and the Air being cleared by an unusual and glorious Light, the Holy Ghost in the manner of a (a) Dove alighted upon his sacred Head, and God the Father gave a Voice from Heaven, saying, *Thou*

(a) *Dove*. As soon as Jesus was baptized, and come out of the Water, he fell down on his Knees in Prayer to his Father, *Luke* 3. 21. and whilst he was praying, the Heavens in a very remarkable manner parted asunder visibly before Christ, and the Spirit of God descended upon him as a Dove descends or alights upon any Thing ; not in the

Shape of a Dove, but a Body of Light came down, and alighted upon him. And tho' *St. Luke* says in a bodily Shape, yet he does not say the bodily Shape of a Dove ; but that this Body of Light, which fell on our Saviour, as he was praying, fell after the Manner and Motion of a Dove.

S^T MATTHEW CHAP. IV. 81

CHRIST fasteth, is tempted, and overcometh.



S^T MATTHEW 4. Verse 3 . 35.

When the tempter came to JESUS, he said, If thou be the Son of GOD, command that these stones be made bread.

art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. This was the Inauguration and Proclaiming of the *Messias*, when he was about to begin to take upon him the Office of the great Prophet of the new Covenant. And this was the greatest Meeting that ever was upon Earth, where the whole Mystery of the Trinity was open'd, and shewn as much as human Apprehension was capable of: The first Person, God the Father, kept his State in Heaven, giving Testimony to his Holy Son, and appeared only in a Voice, without any visible Representation: The second Person in the Veil of Humanity: And the third descending in a glorious Body of Light with the Motion of a Dove. Thus was manifested to *Israel* the Blessed Saviour of the World by Baptism, to which by his Submission he gave his Sanction, and to all who should be rightly baptized the Kingdom of Heaven should be open'd, as was miraculously done in this Ceremony.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, had open'd the Heavens, which hither o never had been open'd to Man, and was declared to be the Son of God, that he might give some Evidence of his Piety and Constancy before he enter'd on his Prophetick Office, it was thought fit some Trial should be made of him; and to that End, by Incitation or Impulse of the Spirit of God (of which he was full, *Luke* 4. 1.) he went from *Jordan* farther into the Desert, not voluntarily putting himself upon Temptation, but doing it according to the Appointment of God; being led into the Wilderness by the good Spirit, to be tempted by the evil. Being there, he was enabled by the miraculous Power of God to continue forty Days and Nights without eating or drinking: During which Time he was assaulted with Variety of Temptations, but that of Hunger seemed to be the most pungent; for at the Expiration of the forty Days, the Devil himself taking Advantage of that Opportunity, attacks him, inviting him to eat Bread of his own providing, which might refresh his human Nature, and at the same Time

prove his Divinity, hoping that his Hunger, and the Desire of convincing the Devil, might tempt him to eat before the Time appointed: *If thou art the Son of God, says he, make use now of that Power to thine own Relief, and turn these Stones into Bread.* But Jesus answered, *It is written, Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word (d) that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* Meaning, That in the Word of God a Promise is expressed or implied of the Supply of all Things necessary for him that is doing the Work of God.

The Devil failing in this Attempt, tries him again, requiring only a Demonstration of his being the Son of God. He taketh him up into the Holy City, that is, he carried him in the Air, without doing him any Hurt, to *Jerusalem*, being permitted by God so to do, and set him on the (e) Battlement of the Temple; and urging *Psalms 91. 11.* to him, he persuaded him to cast himself down from thence, by that Means to testify himself to be the Son of God; for if it were so, he might do this securely. Jesus understood his Design; and tho' he was secure of God's Protection, yet he would not tempt God, nor vainly solicit his Providence, by tempting him to an unnecessary Conservation. This Assault then proving ineffectual as the former, the Devil unites all his Force of Art and Stratagem; places the Holy Jesus upon an exceeding high Mountain, and by an Angelical Power draws into one View an admirable Map of all the Beauties and Glory of the World, in as splendid and inviting Manner as he could, and represents it to the Eyes of Jesus, saying, *All these Things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* The Devil growing thus violent in his Temptations, and so impudent and blas-

(d) *Word.* Bread or ordinary means of sustaining Men is not of necessity to the Life of Man: God can feed and uphold him other Ways, whatsoever he pleaseth to make use of to that Purpose; his bare Word, and nothing else, *Deut. 8. 3.*

(e) *Battlement.* The *Greek* Word

Pterugion signifies literally a little Wing; but it does here denote the exterior Circuit of the Top of an House which compasseth it in to keep Men from danger of falling from the Roof, and is therefore in the Law injoin'd in their Buildings, *Deut. 22. 8.* So that the *Greek* ought to be render'd *Battlement*.

phemous in his Demands, provoked the Holy Lamb to assume his Godlike Power, and command him away, telling him, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him (f) only shalt thou serve.* Then for a (g) while Satan left tempting him, (afterwards setting himself more industriously to work on all Stratagems to take away his Life) and the Angels came and minister'd to him, being Messengers of Comfort sent from his Father to support his Humanity, and employ'd in resisting and discountenancing the Assaults and temporal Hostilities of the Spirits of Darkness.

Whilst our blessed Lord was in the Desert, by a Forty-days Fast doing Penance for our Sins, and struggling against and overcoming all the Temptations and Allurements of the Devil, St. John, as became the Office of a Forerunner, ceased not to give publick Testimony of Christ now manifested: For after that by a Sign from Heaven the Baptist was confirm'd in Spirit, and understood Jesus to be the *Messias*, he immediately publish'd to the *Jews* what God had manifested to him: And first to the Priests and Levites, sent from the *Sanhedrin* or Council, he declared that himself was not the (b) Christ, nor *Elias*, nor that Prophet whom they by a special Tradition did expect to be revealed they knew not when. As concerning himself, he said, "That he was the Voice of one
" crying in the Wilderness, make straight the Way of

(f) *Only.* St. *Augustin*, and the *Romanists* after him, to defend their Saint and Image-Worship, observe that our Saviour in *Mat. 4. 10.* does not say, *Thou shalt only worship the Lord thy God*, tho' he says, *Him only shalt thou serve*: Inferring from hence, That because the Word *only* is not used before or with the Word *Worship*, that therefore we may worship Saints and Images as they do. But this is to be more subtle than the Devil himself, who having only requir'd of our Saviour to fall down and worship him, went off baffled at his Answer, which yet would have been imperfect and impertinent, if St. *Augustin's* Fancy were true; and on which

the Devil no doubt, who is not wont to slip any Advantage, should have taken hold. But if this Father, and those that blindly follow'd his Authority, had applied themselves more closely to study the Style of the Scriptures, they would have been ashamed to use such Kind of Arguments; for it is evident that the Word *only*, which is expressed in the Command of serving God, is also understood in that of worshipping him.

(g) *Luke 4. 13.*

(b) The following Texts relate to the remaining Part of this Paragraph; *John 1. 20, 21. v. 23, 26, 27. v. 15, 27, 30. Mat. 3. 11.*

“ the Lord :” But there was one amongst them, not known, a Person of great Dignity, to whom the Baptist was not worthy to do the meanest Office ; who coming after *John*, was preferr’d before him ; who was to increase, and the Baptist to decrease ; who did baptize with the Holy Ghost and with (i) Fire.

This was the illustrious Character of our Blessed Lord’s personal Prerogative but as yet no Demonstration was made of his Person, till after the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus : And then, when and wherever the Baptist saw him, he points him out with his Finger, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World : This is he.* But more particularly after the Return of our Blessed Lord from the Wilderness : For *John* having to the Priests and Levites disowned himself to be Christ, the (k) next Day he seeth Jesus coming to him, and by the Power of the Holy Ghost he cries out, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World ;* and confirming his former Testimony of him, he adds, *This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a Man that is preferred before me, for he was before me. And tho’ I knew him not, yet I knew that he should be made manifest to Israel ; therefore am I come baptizing with Water.* And *John* bare farther record of the *Messias*, saying, *I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven, as a Dove descends, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not ; but he that sent me to baptize with Water, the same said to me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. This, says he, I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God.*

The Day after the Baptist appeared again ; and besides the Multitudes that promiscuously flock’d to hear his Discourses, he had, according to the manner of the *Jewish* Masters, some peculiar and select Disciples, who more constantly attended upon his Lectures, and for

(i) *Fire.* Fire here, according to St. *Cbryostom*, signifies the Efficacy of the Holy Ghost ; whose Operation is to mighty where it takes, that like Fire it consumes the Impurities of Sin.

(k) *John* ., v. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. *Mat.* 3. v. 16.

the most part waited upon his Person. Amongst these was *Andrew*, who was then with him about *Jordan*, when our Saviour, who some time since had been baptized, came that way: Upon whose Approach the Baptist told them that this was the *Messias*, the great Person of whom he had so often spoken, to usher in whose Appearing his whole Ministry was but subservient; that this was the Lamb of God, the true Sacrifice that was to expiate the Sins of Mankind. Upon this Testimony (l) *Andrew* and another Disciple (probably St. *John*) follow our Saviour to the Place of his Abode. After some Converse with him, *Andrew* goes to acquaint his Brother *Simon*, and both together came to Christ; who, as soon as he beheld *Simon*, said, *Thou art Simon the Son of Jona, thou shalt be called* (m) *Cephas*, which signifies a Stone.

The Day following Jesus going into *Galilee* finds out (n) *Philip* of *Bethsaida*, and bids him follow him; which was the constant Form he used in making choice of his Disciples, and those that did inseparably attend upon him. *Philip* being thus honourably distinguished by his Lord and Saviour, and Religion having taken possession of his Mind, it soon diffuses itself; for away he goes, finds out (o) *Nathanael*, a Man of Note and Eminency, and acquaints him with the Tidings of the new-found *Messias*. *Nathanael* cannot easily be induced to give Credit to *Philip's* News; for the Title of *Nazarene* was

(l) *Andrew*. Upon this Account St. *Andrew* is generally by the Fathers and antient Writers stiled the *Protocletos*, or first-called Disciple; tho' in a strict Sense he was not so: For tho' he was the first of the Disciples that came to Christ, yet he was not called till afterwards.

(m) *Cephas*. *Anacleto* and other Roman Writers weakly derive *Cephas* (the Syriac Name of *Peter*, which signifies a Stone) from the Greek Word *Kephalē*, which signifies a Head, and by this silly Mistake prove St. *Peter's* Supremacy.

(n) *Philip*. The Prerogative of being first call'd evidently belongs to *Philip*,

he being the First-fruits of our Lord's Disciples. For tho' *Andrew* and *Peter* were the first that came to and conversed with Christ, yet did they immediately return to their Trades again, and were not call'd to their Discipleship till above a whole Year after, when *John* was cast into Prison.

(o) *Nathanael*. Here is room for a very probable Conjecture of St. *Augustin* on *Nathanael*; it may be wonder'd at, that our Saviour bestowing such particular Marks of Esteem on this good Man, did not chuse him in the College of Apostles; To which St. *Augustin* gives this for Answer, Because he was a

Doctor

was both by *Jews* and *Gentiles* reckoned the greatest Re-
proach could be set on any one ; therefore *Nathanael*
questions with *Philip*, Can any good Thing come out
of *Nazareth* ? But *Philip* insisting on what he had seen
and heard, urges him to go along with him and see ;
which he did, and was quickly convinc'd. *Nathanael*
no sooner had approach'd his Saviour, but he receives
from him a most ample Testimony of his holy Simpli-
city and Honesty in these words, *Behold an Israelite in-*
deed, in whom is no guile ! *Nathanael* in a Surprise asks
the Lord how he knew him ? Jesus told him, that be-
fore *Philip* called him, when he was under the Fig-tree
he saw him. Upon which, in an Ecstasy of Joy, *Nathanael*
acknowledges his Saviour, *Thou art the promised*
Messias, described to us as a King : And Jesus took this
Will and Forwardness of Affection of *Nathanael* in so
good part, that he promised him greater Things ; which
gave Occasion to the first Prophecy made by our Sa-
viour. For he said unto him, *Because I said I saw thee*
under the Fig-tree, believest thou ? Thou shalt see greater
Things than these. And then he prophesied, (*p*) That
he should see Heaven opened, and the Angels of God
ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

Much about the same Time there happened to be a
Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, in the Neighbourhood of
his Dwelling, to which Jesus and his Mother being in-
vited, he went to do Civility to the Persons espoused,
and Honour to the holy Rite of Marriage. The Per-
sons then married were but of indifferent Fortunes,
richer in the Love of their Neighbours, than in the
Fulness of their large Possessions. They had more
Company than Wine : For the (*q*) Master of the Feast

Doctor of the Law ; which Profession
at that Time was grown very scanda-
lous, by reason of the many and vile
Corruptions crept into it ; which soon
after was the Occasion of so many Woes
proclaim'd against the Professors of it
by our Saviour.

(*p*) *John* i. 51.

(*q*) *Master of the Feast.* According
to the Piety and Order of the *Jewish*

Nation, they chose the *Architriclinos*, or
Master of the Feast from the Order of
Priests to be the President of it, that by
the Reverence of his Person he might
restrain all Inordination, by his Discre-
tion govern and order the Circumstan-
ces, by his religious Knowledge direct
the Solemnities of Marriage, and by
his Power keep the Guests within the
Bounds of Modesty and Prudence.

complained

complained to the Bridegroom, that the Guests wanted Wine. As soon as the holy Virgin Mother had notice of the Want of Wine, she mentioned it to Christ, as an Opportunity of revealing his Power, by shewing a Miracle in supplying the Guests. But Christ answer'd, *Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine Hour is not yet come*: By this Answer intending her no Denial, to whom he always bare a religious Respect, but telling her, that this Part of his Office, to which he was sent by God, was a thing, wherein she, tho' his earthly Parent, was not to interpose; adding moreover, that it was not yet seasonable for him to shew his Power to all, intimating his Design, that he would do it more privately, than by her Words she intended. Whereupon, that none but the Waiters might take Notice of it (who knowing the Wine was all spent, must of course know if any Supply were made) she gives express Charge to them to do whatsoever he commanded. There were there six (r) Water-Pots of Stone, Cisterns of a competent Bigness, out of which they were wont to draw Water for every Man's Use. The Servants fill them to the Brim, and, as they were commanded, drew out, and presented to the Governor of the Feast, who knew not of it, till the Miracle grew publick: For while the Guests wonder'd at the Management of this Feast in keeping the best Wine till the last, it being the Custom of the *Jews* to give their Guests the strongest and richest Wines at first, it grew apparent that he who was the Lord of the Creatures, which in their first Seeds have an obediential Capacity to receive the Impresses of what Forms he pleases to imprint, could give new Natures, and produce new Qualities in any Subject in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

(r) *Water-Pots.* These were set there to wash in, after the Manner of the *Jews*, who constantly washed before Meat; especially in all publick Meetings, for fear of touching Pollutions, or

contracting illegal Impurities; which they did with a Curiousness next to Superstition, washing the very Beds and Tables at their Feasts.

This was the Beginning of Miracles which Jesus did in *Cana of Galilee*; by which he gave Evidence of the Presence of his Divinity, and accordingly his Disciples believed on him.

Immediately after this Miracle, Jesus went down to *Capernaum*, and abode there a few Days; but the great Feast of the Passover being near, he went up to *Jerusalem*, where the first publick Act of Record that he did, was an Act of holy Zeal and Religion in behalf of the Honour of God and his Temple: For divers Merchants and Exchangers of Money made the Temple a mere Market and Bank, and brought Beasts thither to be sold for Sacrifice against the great Paschal Solemnity, just approaching. At the Sight of which the blessed Jesus, being moved with Zeal and Indignation, made a Whip of Cords, and drove the Beasts out of the Temple, overthrew the Bankers (s) Tables, and commanded them that sold Doves to take them from thence. His holy Zeal was heighten'd at the Profanation of the Temple, which was peculiarly set apart for God's Service; and therefore he here publish'd the Religion of holy Places, establishing their Sacredness for ever by his Gospel admonition at *Jerusalem*: *Take these Things hence; make not my Father's House a House of Merchandize, for it shall be called a House of Prayer to all Nations*. This Action of our Saviour's appearing to some like the religious Bigotry of the Zealots among the Jews, if it was not attested by something extraordinary, they thought might be abused into an Excess of Liberty; and therefore they required a Sign of him, to shew by what Au-

(s) *Tables*. The Greek Word *Trapeza*, Table, here is that from which those that dealt in returning Money, or in Bills of Exchange, and made Advantage or Gain by so doing, are called *Trapezitæ* ordinarily among Authors. But here the *Trapezitæ* seems to signify that Sort of Men, who (as Merchants among us) return Money for others to some other Place, by which they received some themselves. Hence it was that the *Israelites* being obliged by the Law to come up to *Jerusalem* (how far soever they

dwelt from it) and there to sacrifice and to offer the half Shekel for the Use of the Temple, *Exod.* 30. 13. (which by reason of the Length of their Journey, sometimes they could not do). These *Trapezitæ* set up their Tables in the very Temple, that so they might traffick with all that had need of them, in like manner as others brought Oxen, and Sheep, and Doves, to sell there to them who had not brought their Sacrifices with them.

thority he did these Things. But he gratify'd their Curiosity only by foretelling the Resurrection of his Body after three Days Death, which he expressed in the Metaphor of the Temple ; *Destroy this Temple, and I will build it up in three Days.* But he spake of the Temple of his Body, and they understood him of the Temple at *Jerusalem* : and it was never rightly construed till it was accomplished ; for after he was risen from the Dead, his Disciples recollected that he had formerly spoken this to them.

B O O K III.

The first Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

AT this publick Convention of the *Jewish* Nation in *Jerusalem*, Jesus performed many Miracles, giving Sight to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame, publishing himself to be the *Messias*, and persuading many to be his Disciples ; amongst whom was *Nicodemus*, a Doctor of the Law, and one of the *Jewish Sanhedrin*, who fearing to come publickly in the Day-time, came by Night to Jesus, and affirmed himself to be convinced by the Miracles which he had seen : for he allow'd that no Man could do those Miracles, unless God were with him ; which plainly testified that he was sent by God to teach and instruct them.

When Jesus perceived his Inclination and Understanding to be so far advanc'd and dispos'd, he began to instruct him in the great Secret and Mystery of Regeneration, telling him, that every Production is of the same Nature and Condition with its Parent ; from Flesh comes Flesh and Corruption ; from the Spirit comes Spirit, and Life, and Immortality ; and nothing

thing could from a Principle of Nature arrive to a supernatural End ; and therefore the only Door to enter into the Kingdom of God, was Water by the Assistance of the Holy Ghost. Moreover the blessed Jesus willing to make Things still more plain and easy, telling him, that acknowledging him to be the *Messias*, or sent from God, would not be sufficient, without undertaking his Service, owning and confessing him in despite of all Fear of Men, being his Profelyte, and forsaking his former Course ! he tells him positively, that unless he would be born again, which is a Phrase to denote a Profelyte of Christ, and when Occasion required, forsake all for Christ's sake, even his former Course of Life and Dignity in the *Jewish* State, (contrary to his coming privately to him by Night, and acknowledging him secretly) he should not see the Kingdom of God, be a Christian here, (a Privilege far beyond that of being a *Jew* or a Member of the *Sanhedrin*) or a Saint hereafter.

This was a strange Philosophy to *Nicodemus* ; who attending only to the literal Sound, not Sense of our Saviour's Words, asks him how a Man of full Years can be born again. But Jesus bid him not to wonder, for this was not a Work of Humanity, but the Fruit of God's Spirit. For the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and is as the Wind, certain and notorious in the Effects, but secret in the Principle and Manner of Production. And therefore this Doctrine was not to be taken according to the Proportions of natural Principles or Experiments of Sense, but to the Secrets of preternatural Speculations.

(1) Then Christ proceeds in his Sermon, telling him there are yet higher Things for him to apprehend and believe ; for this, in respect of some other Mysteries of his Gospel, was but as Earth in comparison of Heaven. Then he tells of his Descent from Heaven, foretels his Death and Ascension, and the Blessing of Redemption, which he came to work for

(1) See *John* 3. to v. 22.

Mankind : He preaches the Love of the Father, the Mission of the Son, the Rewards of Faith, and the Glories of Eternity ; he upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the Differences of a holy and corrupt Conscience ; the Shame and Fears of the one, and the Confidence and Serenity of the other. And this is the Sum of his Sermon to *Nicodemus* ; which was the fullest of mysterious Speculation and abstracted Sense of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his Passion, all his other Sermons being more practical.

From *Jerusalem* the Holy Jesus goes into the Country of *Judea*, attended by many Disciples who were convinc'd of his Divinity by the Evidence of his Miracles : and there he tarried with them and baptized ; at which Time *John* also was baptizing in *Ænon*, near to *Salem*, a Place chosen by him as commodious to that Purpose by reason of the Pools of Water. But *John's* Disciples hearing that Jesus baptized, came to tell him, that the Person to whom he bare Witness, received Profelytes with the same Ceremony of Baptism as he did, and that there was a great Recourse to him. In Answer to whom *John* says ; I can do no more than I have Commission from God to do, and that Commission doth not equal me to him ; and therefore you cannot but remember, that I always said of my self, I am not the Messias, but only his Herald. *John* therefore acquitting himself thus in publick by renewing his former Testimony of Christ, that he was the Messias, foretels that his own Ministry was near at an End, that the Messias should daily (v) increase in Splendor, but that he should proportionably decrease, for Christ came from above, was above all ; and the Sum of his Doctrine was, that which he had heard and seen from the Father, whom God sent to that Purpose ; to whom God had set his Seal, that he was true ; who spake the Words of God ; whom the Father loved ; to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose Hands

(v) Increase. See *John* 3. v. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

God had delivered all Things ; this was he, whose Testimony the World received not. And that they might know not only what Person they slighted, but how great Salvation they also neglected, he sums up all his Sermons, and finishes his Mission with this Saying, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life ; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.

Now that the Baptist had fulfilled his Office of bearing Witness to the Saviour of the World, God was pleased to give him his Writ of Ease, and to bring him to his Reward upon this Occasion. *John*, who had learnt to despise the World and all its exterior Vanities, did his Duty so justly and without Respect of Persons, that as he reprov'd the People for their Prevarications, so he spared not *Herod*, tho' a Prince, for his ; but frankly and honestly told him, that it was utterly unlawful for him to live with *Herodias*, his Brother *Philip's* Wife. *Herodias* being touch'd with this Reproof from *John* to *Herod*, designed him Mischief, and would have removed him out of the Way by some Death or other, but could not any Way compass it : For (w) *Herod*, because of the Influence *John* had over the People, was afraid to meddle with him, *Mat.* 14. 5. and therefore shut him up in Prison ; where, whether he heard him oft and gladly, as some Versions have it, I shall refer it to the Note : but it's certain this one particular of *Herodias* stuck

(w) *Herod*. Our Translation and that of *Geneva* seem to represent *Herod* as a Prince who respected *John* Baptist, and had a great Esteem for all that he said, *Mark* 6. 20. tho' in *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*, he is represented as a wicked Wretch, whom nothing but the Fear of the People, that look'd on *John* as a Prophet, did hinder from putting him to Death, *Mat.* 14. 5. *Luke* 3. 19, 20. But we are to consider, that the *Greek* Word, which the *Geneva* Version translates to *reverence*, and ours to *observe*, signifies to keep Prisoner, or to observe with an ill Design. We must consider farther, that *R. Stephanns*, and

Beza, had some *Greek* Copies wherein instead of the Words which we render, *He did many Things*, there are Words which signify, *He was much vexed or troubled* : Which indeed much better represent the Temper of that dissolute and wicked Prince. *Josephus* observes, that *Herod* had put the Baptist to Death, because he thought the People led by him ; which is an Argument that he did neither respect him, nor hear him gladly, nor do many Things for Love of him. Tho' this text is otherwise explain'd by *Dr. Hammond*, and many ancient Commentators.

close

close to him, tho' *John's* Reproofs could not prevail with him to part with her; and for which the Baptist about a Year after felt the Fury and Malice of a revengeful Woman's Spleen in Prison; where we shall leave him, and return to the History.

The blessed Jesus hearing that *John* was cast into Prison, and that the Pharisees were envious at him for the great Multitudes of People that resorted to his Baptism, which he ministred not in his own Person, but by the Deputation of his Disciples, they finishing the Ministration which himself (x) began, he left *Judea*, and came again into *Galilee*; and in his Passage he touch'd at *Sychar* a City of *Samaria*; where in the Heat of the Day and Weariness of his Journey, he sat himself down in a Place where *Jacob* had once digged a Well; whither, when his Disciples were gone to buy Meat, a *Samaritan* Woman came to draw Water, of whom Jesus asked some to cool his Thirst. The Woman little knew the Excellency of the Person who asked so small a Favour; but prosecuting the Spite of her Nation, and the Interest and (y) Quarrel of the Schism, demanded why he, who was a *Jew*, should ask Water of her that was a *Samaritan*, the *Jews* having no Commerce or Communication of Familiarity with the *Samaritans*. This Quarrel so implanted, improved in every Understanding; for tho' the Woman perceived Jesus to

(x) Began. *Euodius* Bishop of *Antioch* reports, that Jesus baptized the blessed Virgin his Mother and *Peter* only, and *Peter* baptized *Andrew*, *James*, and *John*, and they others. *Niceph.* l. 2. c. 3. *Hist.*

(y) Quarrel. The Ground of the Quarrel was this. In the sixth Year of *Hezekiah*, *Saimanassar* King of *Assyria* sack'd *Samaria*, transported the *Israelites* to *Assyria*, and planted an *Assyrian* Colony in *Samaria*: Which Colony being destroyed by divine Vengeance, the King thought the Cause was their not serving the God of *Israel*, and therefore sent a *Jewish* captive Priest to instruct the remaining *Assyrians* in the *Jewish* Religion, notwithstanding they

still retained the *Gentile* Superstitions, till *Manasses*, the Brother of *Jaddi* the High-Priest at *Jerusalem*, married the Daughter of *Sanballat*. *Manasses* being reproved for marrying the Daughter of an uncircumcised *Gentile*, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to *Samaria*, persuades his Father-in-law to build a Temple in Mount *Gerizim*, introduces the Rites of daily Sacrifice, and makes himself High-Priest. pretends to be the true Successor of *Aaron*, and commences a Schism in the Time of *Alexander* the Great. Hence the Question of Religion grew so high, that wherever a *Jew* and *Samaritan* met, it occasion'd great Animosities, which often terminated in Bloodshed or Murder.

be a Prophet, yet she undertook this Question with him: *Our Fathers worshipped in this Mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the Place where Men ought to worship.* Jesus knew the Schism was great enough already, and he was unwilling to make it wider; and tho' he gave Testimony to the Truth by saying, (z) Salvation is of the *Jews*, and we know what we worship, ye do not; yet because the Subject of the Question was shortly to be taken away, Jesus takes Occasion to preach the Gospel, to hasten an Expedient by way of Anticipation to reconcile the disagreeing Interests, and settle a Revelation to be verified for ever.

But all this while the Holy Jesus was thirsty, and therefore hastens to discourse of Water, tho' as yet he got none. He tells her of living Water, of eternal Satisfaction, of never thirsting again, of her own personal Condition, of (a) matrimonial Relation, and professes himself to be the *Messias*: Upon which he is interrupted by his Disciples, who had returned from the City, and wonder'd to see him alone talking with the Woman, contrary to his usual Custom and Reservation.

The Woman full of Joy and Wonder left her Water-pot, and ran to the City to publish the *Messias*; and immediately the People of the City came out to see, and many believed on him upon the Testimony of the Woman, and more when they heard his own Discourses. Then they invited him to the Town; and tho' *Mat. 10. 5.* he forbid his Disciples at that Time to go into any City of the *Samaritans*, (that they might make the *Jews* see they were his peculiar Care at that Time) yet to shew that the Gospel was not their Inclosure, he himself now stays two Days with

(z) *John 4. 22.*

(a) When our Saviour had bid the Woman of *Samaria* to call her Husband, she answer'd, I have no Husband; and the Translations make our Saviour approve her Answer, by replying, Thou hast well said, I have no Husband. But *Erasmus* and others have very judi-

ciously observ'd, that this is an ironical Way of speaking, which is so far from approving what one says, that, on the contrary, it represents it absurd and ridiculous. The Words then ought to be render'd, *Fiercely answer'd indeed I have no Husband, &c.*

ST JOHN CHAP. IV. 9
 Christ talketh with the woman of Samaria.



ST JOHN 4. Verse -. 48.

*Then cometh a woman of Samaria,
 to draw water, JESUS saith unto her:
 Give me to drink.*

the *Samaritans*, who receiv'd him with hospitable Civilities ; after which he return'd to his own *Galilee*, where he was received with great Reverence and Respect, by reason of the many Miracles which the *Galileans* saw him do at the Feast ; for they also went to the Feast. And being at *Cana* where he wrought the first Miracle, a certain (*b*) noble Person came and addressed himself to Jesus with great Humility and Reverence, desiring him that he would come to his House, and cure his Son now at the point of Death : This Request he seconds with much Importunity, fearing his Son should be dead before he could get to him. The Holy Jesus, to shew the Excellency of his Power, and that he did not perform his Miracles by any natural Operations, cured the Child at a distance, and dismiss'd the believing Parent, who joyfully returning home, was by the Way congratulated with the welcome News of his Son's Recovery ; and inquiring of his Servants the Hour when the Child began to amend, by the Account they gave him he recovered at the same time when Jesus pronounc'd those salutary healing Words, Thy Son liveth. Upon this happy Miracle the pious Courtier is convinc'd of his Saviour's Divinity, and believes on him ; and not only he, but his whole Family was converted, and become Christ's Disciples. This was the second Miracle that Jesus did in *Cana*, he having perform'd many betwixt these in other Places, at *Jerusalem* and other Parts of *Palestine*.

After this Jesus left *Nazareth*, and came to *Capernaum*, a Maritime Town, and of great Resort, choosing that for his Scene of Preaching, and Place of Dwelling : For now the Time was fulfilled, that the Office of *John Baptist* was expir'd, and the Kingdom of God was at hand. Our blessed Saviour therefore

(*b*) Noble. The Greek Word *Basilikos* in this Place undoubtedly signifies an Officer of the King ; one that had some Place at the Court of *Herod Antipat*, who was then Tetrarch of *Galilee*. St.

Jerom renders it *Palatin*. But the great Mistake of all about this Word is in the *Latin Version*, which he reads *Regulus*, by mistake reading the Greek Word *Basilikos* for *Basilicos*.

preached the Sum of the Gospel, Faith and Repentance. And what that was, all his Sermons afterwards did declare.

Whilst he dwelt in this Town of *Capernaum*, the Work of the Gospel growing great and pregnant, the Holy Jesus thought it convenient to choose Disciples to his Ministry and Service in the Work of Preaching, and to be Witnesses of all that he should say and do, for Ends which were afterwards made publick. In order to which he walked by the Sea-side, where he saw two Brothers, *Simon* which is called *Peter*, and *Andrew* his Brother, casting a Net into the Sea, for they were Fishers. Whilst he was preaching there, the People so throng'd about him, that he was forced to enter into *Simon's* Ship; and desiring him to put off a little Way from the Land, he sat down and taught the People from the Ship: Which Sermon of his he confirms immediately with a Miracle: For as soon as he had done speaking to the People, he bad *Simon* launch out into the Deep, and let down the Nets; who despairing of Success from the ill Luck he had met with over Night, told Jesus it would be to no purpose; however in obedience to him he would let the Nets down, which he had no sooner done, but he inclosed such a Multitude of Fishes, that the Net broke, and they were forced to call to their Partners for Help; who coming filled both the Ships, so that they began to sink. This prodigious Draught of Fish struck *Simon Peter* and his Partners with Amazement and Fear, insomuch that *Peter* in a Sense of his own Unworthiness falls down at the Feet of Jesus, and desires him to depart from him, for he was not worthy of his Presence. But Jesus speaks Comfort to poor terrified *Peter*, bids him not fear; for by that Miracle he had consigned him and his Partners to become Fishers of Men, who by their Prudence, Holiness, and good Doctrine, should gain Souls to God. And as soon as they had brought their Ships to Land, and secured them, Jesus commanded *Simon* and his Brother *Andrew*
to

to follow him ; who in dutiful Obedience to the Call of their blessed Lord, leave their Nets, and all Things else, and follow him. And when Jesus had gone a little farther, he saw two other Brothers, *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, and *John* his Brother, in a Ship with *Zebedee* their Father mending their Nets. And straightway he called them, whose early Faith and swift Obedience to the Commands of their Blessed Lord hasten them to enter into the Service of their Master, who alone was able to emancipate them from the Slavery of Sin, and this wicked World. They therefore leaving their Father *Zebedee* in the Ship with the hired Servants, immediately followed him. With this little Family Jesus goeth up and down *Galilee*, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, healing all manner of Diseases, curing Demoniacs, cleansing Lepers, and administering Strength and Comfort to all diseased and afflicted Persons that were brought to him.

Among the many Instances of remarkable Cures which Jesus wrought, there was one very conspicuous ; for while he was teaching in a Synagogue at *Capernaum*, and the People stood astonished at his Doctrine (for the Authority and Power with which he expressed himself, shewed him more than mortal) to add to their Admiration, one of the Congregation that was possessed with an unclean Spirit cried with a loud Voice, *Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy us ? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.* Thus the very Devils confess'd him to be the very Christ, the Son of God : But Jesus rebuked the Devils, not suffering them farther to proclaim him to the World ; choosing rather to implant Faith in the Persuasions of his Disciples by moral Arguments, and the pleasing Demonstrations of the Spirit, than to be manifested by the Conviction and forced Testimonies of accursed and unwilling Spirits. These Wonders spread his Fame about every where, which daily advanced by the Increase of fresh Miracles : For going from the Sy-

nagogue to *Simon's* House, by a Touch of his Sacred Hand he cured *Simon's* Wife's Mother of a Fever. These repeated Instances of his divine Power and Authority invite all People either thro' Curiosity or Necessity to come to him, but especially the latter; for whoever had any Demoniacks or diseased Persons, they brought them to him, in a faithful and assured Hope and Expectation of a speedy Relief and Cure; of which none that ever addressed themselves to him ever fail'd, for his Compassion was as great as his Power. These miraculous Cures made him the Talk and Wonder of Men; insomuch, that by the continual Application of the distressed to him, he was, as it were, besieged by an Army of Invalids in *Simon's* House, who flocked thither for Relief, and whom he expeditiously dismiss'd with Cure and Comfort.

After he had healed those Multitudes which beset *Simon's* House, he retired into a desert Place very early in the Morning, that he might have an Opportunity to pray free from the Importunities and Noise of the Multitude. But he could not be so hid, being soon discover'd even in his very Solitude; for the Multitude found him out, imprisoning him in their constant and undeniable Attendance. Therefore to prevent their more importunate Addresses, Jesus plainly told them, he must preach the Gospel to other Cities also, resolving to pass to the other side of the Lake of *Genesareth*, so to quit the Throng. Whither as he was passing, a Scribe offered himself a Disciple to his Institution; till Jesus told him his Condition was worse than that of Foxes and Birds, for whom an Habitation was provided, but none for him, no not a Place to lay his Head, and find Rest. What afterward became of this forward Professor we find not. Others that were Probationers of this Fellowship Jesus bound to a speedy Profession, not suffering one to go home to bid his Friends farewell, nor another so much as to bury his Dead.

By the Time that Jesus got to the Ship it was late, and he, heavy to sleep, slept soundly as Weariness and
Innocence

Innocence cou'd make him, insomuch that a violent Storm which then happen'd could not awake him ; till, the Ship almost cover'd with the impetuous Fury and Dashings of the Waves, the Men already sunk in their Spirits, and the Ship ready to sink too, the Disciples awaked him, and called for Help, saying, *Master, carest not thou that we perish?* Jesus arising reprov'd their Infidelity, and commanding the Winds to be still, and the Seas peaceable, immediately there was a great Calm. This gave a fresh Surprise to all the People in the Ship, who seeing with what Authority he restrained the raging Winds and Waves, could not forbear asking who he was, tho' his Actions plainly denoted him a Person sent from God, and indeed with divine Power.

The Storm thus appeased, they presently arrived in the Land of the (c) *Gerasens*, or *Gadarens*. Near to the City of *Gadara* there were many Sepulchres in the Hollowness of the Rocks, where the Dead were buried, and where many superstitious Persons used the *Memphitick* and *Theffalick* Rites, invoking evil Spirits. At the very Instant of our Saviour's Arrival in the Country there met him (d) two possessed with Devils from these Tombs, exceeding fierce, which had been so for a long time, and so infested those Parts that no Man durst pass that Way. As soon as they saw the holy Jesus approach they cry'd out, *Jesus, thou Son of God, what have we to do with thee, art thou come to torment us before our (e) Time?* But

(c) *Gerasens*. St. *Matthew*. Ch. 8. v. 28. calls them so ; but St. *Mark*, Ch. 5. v. 1. and St. *Luke*, Ch. 8. v. 26. calls them *Gadarens* ; the reason of which is their lying near together. The Word *Gergesenes* or *Gerasens* was the remaining Name of an extinct Prople, being one of the Nations whom the Sons of *Jacob* drove from their Inheritance. In this Land there were two Cities ; *Gadara* from the Tribe of *Gad*, to whom it fell by Lot in the Division of the Land, (which having been destroyed by the *Jews*, was rebuilt by *Pompey* at the Request of *Demetrius Gadarensis*, *Pompey's* freed-man ; and near it was *Gerasa*, as *Josephus* re-

ports. Which Diversity of Towns and Names is the Cause of the various Recitation of this Story by the Evangelists.

(d) *Two*. St. *Mark*, Ch. 5. v. 1. and St. *Luke*, Ch. 8. v. 27. mentions but one Man ; St. *Matthew*, Ch. 8. v. 28. mentions two ; which Difference has little Weight in it, if any : For St. *Matthew* naming two says the Truth, and the others, which name but one, do not deny that there were more. Besides, St. *John*, Ch. 21. v. 25. says, the Evangelists do not pretend to write all that was done by Christ, for the World then could not contain all the Books of his Acts.

(e) *Time*. That is, before the Time
E 3 of

But Jesus immediately shews his Power over them, by commanding the Devils out of the possessed Persons. There was no room to dispute his Authority, they must out of the poor Wretches, whom they had so long possessed and tortur'd, and seek another Habitation.

At that Time there were certain Men feeding (f) Swine, which tho' extremely abominated by the *Jewish* Religion, yet for the Use of the *Roman* Armies, and Quartering of Soldiers, they were permitted, and divers Privileges granted to the Masters of such Herds. The Devils therefore besought Jesus that he would not send them into the eternal Abyss, but permit them to enter into the Swine; which he grants, and the Swine immediately ran down a steep Place into the Lake of *Genesareth*, and perished in the Waters: Revenging hereby, as they in their diabolical Cunning and Malice thought, their being dispossessed of Man, whom they delight to torment and destroy, and so exasperate the Inhabitants against our Lord for the Loss of their Swine, that they should neither entertain him nor his Gospel; which at that Time in part did so fall out; for this Accident so troubled the Inhabitants, that they came and intreated Jesus to depart their Country. These were some of those who were not worthy of the great Blessing the Presence of the Son of God brought with him, and therefore he takes them at their Word; for he immediately leaves Heathen *Galilee*, and comes to the lesser *Galilee*, and so again to the City of *Caper-naum*, where he was met by several Scribes and Pharisees, who came from *Galilee*. And while they were sitting in a House, which was so encompassed with Multitudes that no Business or Necessities could be admitted at the Door, a poor Paralytick was brought by four

of the last Judgment, when they are eternally punished; till then they remain in the airy Region. Thus *St. Augustin de civitate Dei*.

(f) *Swine*. Tho' it was contrary to the Custom of the *Jews* to keep Swine; yet the City of *Gadara* being a *Greek* City, and inhabited chiefly by *Greeks*

and *Syrians*, and for the Necessities of the *Roman* Soldiers, it is no way strange, that Swine were kept there. Besides, this City of *Gadara* is by *Josephus* reckoned among the *Greek* Cities which *Pompey* took from the *Jews*, and consequently but few, if any *Jews* at that Time inhabited there.

Men

10
ST MARK CHAP. V. All the devils be-
lought JESUS, saying, Send us into the Swine.



ST MARK 5 Verse 13. 54.
*And the unclean spirits went out, & entred
into the Swine, & the herd ran violently down
a steep place into the Sea etc.*

Men to the House, where being denied Entrance by the vast Crouds that throng'd about the Door, their earnest Zeal and Hope soon furnish'd them with Means to approach the heavenly Physician ; for they uncover the Roof of the House, and let the sick Man down in his Bed with Cords in the midst before Jesus, as he was conferring with the Doctors. He knew the Cause of this extraordinary manner of conveying this poor diseased Wretch to him, and being pleased with their Faith, he saith to the sick Man, *Son, be comforted, thy Sins are forgiven thee.* This Expression offended the Scribes and Pharisees, thinking it to be Blasphemy, and that none but God could forgive Sins ; wherefore the blessed Jesus, to verify his Absolution in proportion to their Understandings (for the *Jews* did believe that all Afflictions were Punishments for Sin, and that removing the Punishment was forgiving the Sin) to prove that his Sins were forgiven him, removed that which they supposed to be the Effect of his Sin, and by curing the Palsy prevented their farther Murmur about the Pardon : *That ye might know,* says he, *that the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins,* he saith to the Sick of the Palsy, (g) *Arise, take up thy Bed and walk.* Immediately the Man arose up among them, and took up the Bed whereon he lay, and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed : And being fully convinced by ocular Demonstration, and satisfied according to their own Principles, they could no longer deny or disown that Power which God had so visibly bestowed on his blessed Son Jesus ; which struck them with Fear and Amazement, and inspir'd them all with the Spirit of Praise to thank and glorify God : Which none did more joyfully than the reviv'd Paralytick, who all the Way he return'd to his own home praised God for his Mercy.

It was not long after the Performance of this mighty Cure that Jesus again walked toward the Sea, and as he passed on his Way thither, seeing *Matthew* the (b) Publican

E 4

(g) *Arise.* Mat. 9. 1. Mark 2. 1. Luke 5. 18.

(b) *Publican.* Tho' the Office of Publican among the Romans was very honourable ;

lican sitting at the (i) Receipt of Custom, he bad him follow him. *Matthew* no sooner hears the divine Summons but he obeys, and readily quits his Office, and all those dazzling Heaps of Gold which command all Things else, but have not Power or Charms enough to bribe his longer Stay with them. *Matthew* being thus called, invites his Master to a Feast, to which he had also invited many of his Brethren Publicans, and others. But the Pharisees, when they saw that he eat with Publicans and Sinners (for so they called all besides themselves) murmur'd and whisper'd against Christ, and expostulated with his Disciples, why their Master and they would do that which was so contrary to the *Jewish* Law, namely, to eat and drink with Heathens, and those that conversed with them? But Jesus undertaking the Argument, gave so fair an Account of his Converse with these Persons, that the Objection turned to his Excuse; for therefore he conversed with them, because they were Sinners: And it was as if a Physician should be reprov'd for having so much to do with sick Persons: Therefore he was sent, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance, to advance the Reputation of Mercy above the Rites of Sacrifice. They farther urg'd the Practice of *John's* Disciples, who fasted often: but that the Disciples of Jesus did not fast. In answer to which Jesus tells them, that the Case of his Disciples was the same with those to whom the Bridegroom was come in Person to espouse the Church; but that the Days should come when the Bridegroom should be taken from them, and that in those Days they should fast.

During this Interview and Argument between the blessed Jesus and the proud Pharisees, *Jairus*, a (k) Ruler of

honourable; yet among both *Jews* and *Greeks*, the Name and Persons were odious, not only because they were Strangers, but because the *Jews* stood upon the Charter of their Nation and Privilege of their Religion, that none of them should pay Tribute; and also because they exercised great Injustice and Oppression, having a Power unlimited.

(i) *Receipt*. The *Greek* Word *Teloneion*, signifies a Publican's Stall.

(k) *Ruler*. There was among the *Jews* the less and greater *Sanhedrin*, or Consistory, *Mat.* 5. 22. The former consisting of twenty-three Judges in every City; the latter of seventy-two in *Jerusalem*. The greater *Sanhedrin* was made up of the Chief Priests and Elders,
or

of the Synagogue, came to him, desiring him that he would help his Daughter, who lay now at the point of Death. He question'd not the Abilities of the holy Jesus, but was confident that if he laid his Hand upon her she would recover. The Forwardness of *Jairus's* Faith claimed our Saviour's Compassion, who was always more ready to grant than we to ask : therefore he strait-way went with him to his House ; to which as he was going a Woman met him that had been diseased with an Issue of Blood twelve Years, without any Hope of Remedy from Art or Nature, and had consumed her Fortune in Expectation of a Cure, but to no purpose. This Woman having heard of the many Miracles Jesus had wrought upon all diseased and demoniack Persons, upon the confident Persuasion of a holy and strong Faith, said, *If I might but touch his Clothes, I shall be whole.* The poor Woman came trembling, full of Hope and Reverence ; and thinking that in the Croud she might not be perceived, she gently touch'd his Garment, and immediately her Distemper was healed. Jesus being sensible of some divine Emanation, which was the Cause of this Cure, turn'd about in the Press, and asked who touched him ? Every one that was near look'd with Indifferency on this Question, it being altogether impossible but that in such a Croud many must touch him : But the poor Woman that had received the Benefit was most nearly affected ; for fearing her Presumption had carried her too far in thus clandestinely stealing a Cure, as she thought, in great Disorder and Concern came to Jesus, and at his Feet declared the whole Truth of what had happen'd to her. Jesus with Joy and Compassion adds Comfort to her Trembling, bids her not fear ; tells her that her Cure was the Effect of her Faith, and so dismisses her with the Blessing of Peace, and a Confirmation of her being perfectly healed, *Be whole of thy Plague* : And the Woman was made whole from that very Hour.

or Presbyters of the People, called often the People, *Judg.* 5. 11. They of the less the Elders of *Israel*, and the Scribes of Consistory were called Rulers, as here.

After

After the working of this Miracle Jesus hastens to the House of *Jairus*, from whence a Servant came and met them with the News of *Jairus's* Daughter's Death, desiring him to give Jesus no farther Trouble ; who, overhearing what the Servant said, comforts *Jairus*, bids him not fear, but believe, and he should find the blessed Effects of Faith in the Recovery of his Daughter. *Jairus* joyfully attends our Saviour to his House, where they find the (1) Minstrels and other People very busily preparing for the Interment of the Ruler's Daughter, with Musick and other Solemnities for the Funeral. For which Jesus reproves them, saying, *Why make ye this a-do ? weep not, but give Place ; for the Maid is not dead, but sleepeth.* Then entering with the Parents into her Chamber, he approach'd her as to one that was asleep, and taking her by the Hand, he called, and awaken'd her from her seeming Sleep of Death ; which struck her Parents with such Astonishment, that they could scarce believe their own Eyes : But Jesus, to confirm his Miracle, order'd them to give her something to eat, to convince them she was alive.

This Miracle thus happily perform'd to the Admiration and Content of the afflicted Parents, he leaves them to the Enjoyment of the comfortable Fruits of it, strictly charging them to conceal it, hereby intending to make the Noise and Report of him less popular. But it is too natural to Humanity to desire most earnestly that from which we are most strictly restrain'd. The glad Parents, and other Witnesses of this Miracle, cannot conceal their Joy, which in gratitude for so great a Mercy they thought they were obliged to divulge.

And here it is to be observ'd, that, as if Time was to be one continued Series of Wonders of the holy Jesus, not a Day passed without some eminent Performances and Exertions of his Divinity : A single Instance in one Day or Place will not compleat his Fame, but each

(1) *Minstrels.* This Custom of having musical Instruments in Funerals crept in among the *Jews* but of later Days, and from the Rites and Ceremo-

nies of the *Gentiles* : For in the Old Testament there is no mention made of any such Solemnity and Custom.

ST MATTHEW CHAP. IX. A woman¹¹
was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years



ST MATTHEW 9. Verſe 20. 21. 58.

*She came behind him, and touched the hem
of his garment. For ſhe ſaid within her ſelf,
If I may touch his garment, I ſhall be whole.*

ST MATTHEW CHAP. IX.¹²

The Rulers daughter restored to life.



ST MATTHEW 9. Verse 25.^{59.}

*(But when the people were put forth,
JESUS went in, and took her by the
hand, and the maid arose.)*

Moment of Time, and every Place where he goes, must give Testimony of his divine Power and Virtue. He was no sooner departed from *Jairus*, but two blind Men address themselves to him for Help; first recognizing his Family, *Thou Son of David*, and then imploring his Aid, *Have mercy upon us*. Jesus commanding the blind Men to be brought to him, demands of them whether they had Faith enough to expect a Cure of their Blindness from him. To which they joyfully reply'd, they believ'd: And as a Testimony of his own Power, and their Faith, he touched their Eyes, proposing the Cure conditionally to them, *According to your Faith be it unto you*. The blessed Effects followed both; for immediately their Eyes were open'd, and they, who had long been depriv'd of the Blessing and Comfort of Light, joyfully now behold it; but with infinitely greater Satisfaction, when they see the true Light that came to enlighten the World.

This miraculous Cure is succeeded by another as great as the preceding, but of a different Nature; for as the Holy Jesus passed along, the People seeing the mighty Power whereby he had healed others, questioning not in the least his omnipotent Gift, bring to him a dumb Man possessed with a Devil, whom he forthwith dislodges, so much to the Wonder and Amazement of the Beholders, that they all unanimously acknowledge the like was never before seen in *Israel*; except the spiteful Pharisees, who being ready to burst with Envy, could hold no longer, but said he cast out Devils by the Help of the Prince of the Devils. This malicious and groundless Calumny our Blessed Lord wisely refutes, by turning their own Argument upon them: For says he, *How can Satan drive out Satan? Or if the whole Community of Devils make an Insurrection and Schism against one another, will they not soon be destroy'd?* By this the Malice of the Pharisees became a Contradiction, being in it self unreasonable; nothing being more sottish and ridiculous than for the Devil to divide his Kingdom, and consequently de-
stroy

stroy his own Power. But this was but the first Eruption of their Malice : All the Year last past, which was the first Year of Jesus's Preaching, every thing was quiet, neither *Jews*, *Samaritans*, or *Galileans*, maligned his Doctrine or Person, but he preach'd undisturbed ; for this was the Year which the Prophet *Isaiab* in his Prediction call'd the acceptable Year of the Lord.

B O O K IV.

The second Year of Christ's publick Ministry.

THE first and peaceable Year of our Blessed Lord's Preaching being expired, there was a Feast of the *Jews*, and Jesus went up to *Jerusalem*. This Feast was the second *Passover* he kept after he began to preach. Being arrived at *Jerusalem*, he finds an impotent Person lying at the (*m*) *Sheep Pool* of *Bethesda*, waiting till the (*n*) *Angel* at a certain Season should move the Waters, after which who-so-

(*m*) *Sheep-pool*. This Sheep-pool was the Place where the Sacrifices used to be washed ; and *Bethesda*, a House of Mercy, so called in *Hebrew*, or an Hospital, where the sick lay to be cured. As to the Sheep-pool, there are many Conjectures about the medicinal Virtue. The Use of it in relation to Sheep was not for the washing of live Sheep there by such as brought them to be sacrificed, but the Carcasses or Entrails of them when they were slain : And this was done by the *Nethinim* (or inferior Officers) who delivered them to the Priests to be offer'd in the Temple : Which supposes this washing to be intermediate between the Slaying and Offering the Sacrifices, and to belong to all the Sacrifices, not the Sheep only. This was the Opinion of some, who gave this as the common assigned Reason of the divine healing Power that these Waters had, because the En-

trails of the Sacrifices were wash'd there.

(*n*) *Angel*. The sick Person was to go into the Pool immediately upon the Moving or Troubling the Waters ; which must signify, that just upon the Moving they had a Force, which soon cool'd or decay'd again by the Sinking of that which was stirred up, or by the Evaporating of it. All which, if it be a natural, and no miraculous Way of curing, it will be the more unlikely, that the Word *Angel* should here signify an *Angel of God*. For it may easily be supposed that there was an Officer or Servant sent down by them that had any Skill in it, to trouble the Waters at a fit Time ; and being a Messenger sent before, as it were, to prepare for the sick Man's coming after him, might well be called *Angelos*, not an Angel, but a Messenger, which the Word in *Greek* properly signifies.

ST JOHN CHAP. V. 13
The Jews' cavil at what JESUS had done.



ST JOHN 5. Verse 10. 61.

*The Jews therefore said unto him that
was cured, It is the Sabbath day, it is not
lawful for thee to carry thy bed.*

ever stepped in first was cured of his Infirmary. The poor Man had labour'd thirty-eight Years under this Distemper, and waited every Season for an Opportunity of getting first into the Pool, but still was prevented by some or other of the Hospital, who got in before him. Jesus seeing the poor Man lying under so many Years Disappointment, had Compassion on him, and asked him whether he would be made whole. The poor Cripple supposing he would have offered him his Assistance to get into the Pool, told him he had no body to help him into the Water. But Jesus meant him a more immediate Cure, for he commands him to rise, take up his Bed and walk. The Man is immediately made whole, and as his Heavenly Physician commanded, takes up his Bed, and prepares to walk to his Home. This Cure happen'd to be wrought upon a Sabbath ; and therefore the *Jews* take Occasion from thence to quarrel with the Man that was cured, telling him that it being the Sabbath he could not answer carrying his Bed. But the poor Man highly pleased with, and intirely depending on the Power and Authority of the great Person that had cured him, tells the malicious *Jews*, That he that had cured him gave him Power to carry his Bed. They asked him who that was : But the Man knew not ; for Jesus had withdrawn himself. Soon after Jesus sees the Man in the Temple, and no doubt suspecting or seeing something irregular in his Demeanor, gives him this preventive Admonition, *Behold thou art whole now ; sin no more, lest a worse Evil happen unto thee.* The Man well knowing his Physician, tells the next *Jews* he met, that it was Jesus who had healed him ; which so enrag'd them that they sought to slay him : For this Offence seem'd double to the *Jews*, both working a Cure, which they thought unlawful on the Sabbath, and also commanding the Man to carry his Bed. To this Exception of theirs against him, because he cured on the Sabbath, Jesus made this Reply : “ (o) God my Father, from

(o) See *John* 5. from v. 17. to the End of the Chapter.

“ whose Rest you take the Celebration of the Sabbath,
 “ did not so rest from all Work on the Sabbath ; but
 “ that ever since he hath done Works of Providence,
 “ of Preservation and Mercy every Day : And why
 “ may not I his Son do so without Exception, my Fa-
 “ ther’s Actions and mine being the same ?” This the
Jews, that knew the Son of God must be of the very
 Divine Nature, (as the Son is of the same Nature with
 his Father) and therefore equal with God, interpre-
 ted to be Blasphemy in him, whom they believed not
 to be the *Messias*, and therefore ought to be punished
 with Death. To this Exception of theirs against
 Christ, he answers, “ Altho’ I affirm my self to
 “ be the Son of God, and so am rightly concluded by
 “ you to be equal with my Father, yet this is far from
 “ being Matter of Impiety in me, far from opposing
 “ my self against God, for I do nothing but what is
 “ the express Will of my Father ; and therefore it was
 “ reasonable for me to * say what I did, that my Fa-
 “ ther’s Actions will justify me in doing the same.
 “ For out of the infinite Love my Father bears to
 “ me, he communicates all Things to me, and by that
 “ Means you are like to have greater Matter of Won-
 “ der than the curing of this sick Man on the Sab-
 “ bath can amount to ; for even to the raising of the
 “ Dead, (which is far greater than that of curing the
 “ Sick) my Father hath communicated his Power to
 “ me ; and as my Father raiseth, so will I whomsoever
 “ I please : And for the Office of judging Angels or
 “ Men, my Father doth it not himself, but hath put
 “ all into the Son’s Hand. According to this you
 “ must be great Hypocrites, to pretend that you zea-
 “ lously honour my Father, when you do despise and
 “ dishonour me, who am sent with this Power at this
 “ time on purpose to be honour’d by all Men, in the
 “ same manner as my Father is honour’d, that so I
 “ may work a Reformation among you. This is so
 “ perfectly the Will of my Father, that I must tell you

* Say. *John* 5. 17.

“ that on your hearkening at this time to me, and
“ believing and entertaining my Doctrine as the Mes-
“ sage of God, depends your eternal Well-being. I
“ assure you, this Power, which God my Father hath
“ given me at this time, extendeth to the greatest
“ Things, even to raising the Dead out of their Graves,
“ which ye shall shortly see exercised by me : For as
“ God hath of himself Power to give Life to any
“ Thing, so hath he given this Power to me, and I have
“ it. And as I am God, my Father hath given me
“ all Power and Authority both now and hereafter.
“ Wonder not at what I say ; for there shall certainly
“ be a Time of general Resurrection for all the Dead,
“ and an Essay thereof shall shortly be seen among
“ you : And the Righteous shall have their Bodies
“ and Souls united in Bliss, and the Wicked have also
“ a Restitution of their Bodies to receive their Punish-
“ ment and Sentence. My Judgment is righteous
“ and agreeable to the Method and Decree of my Fa-
“ ther, that they that believe on me shall be saved,
“ and they that reject me shall not. This my Father
“ hath declared ; and therefore it is not seeking Ho-
“ nour or Revenge to my self that I say or do this,
“ but going according to the Prescript of my Father.
“ Ye know there is another that beareth Witness of
“ me ; and for a Proof thereof ye sent to *John*, who
“ baptized me, when the Spirit descended on me ; and
“ he saw it, and testified to you the Truth of it. He
“ was *Elias*, being like Fire, and his Word like a
“ burning Lamp, and for a while ye liked well to
“ hear him ; but as soon as he testified of me, then
“ ye presently rejected him. Ye look into and examine
“ the Old Testament, whereon ye depend, and be-
“ lieve, thro’ the Performance of the Mosaical Law,
“ ye shall have eternal Life ; but on Examination
“ ye will find all those Prophecies are Types, and
“ fulfilled in me, and that all the Promises of Life
“ there made have an Aspect on the Giver of Life.
“ But these, tho’ ye look on them as the Reposi-
“ tory

“ tory of your present and future Blifs, and tho’
“ they direct you to me as the only Means to attain
“ it, yet ye wilfully reject me, and consequently that
“ Blifs. Alas ! It is not your good Opinion or Ap-
“ probation that I contend for, while I thus speak :
“ Ye have not the Love of God in you, and therefore
“ ye reject me. Do but consider the Unreasonable-
“ ness of your Actions : I bring my Commission from
“ God, and ye regard it not ; yet if another without
“ any Commission from God, a mere Counterfeit, in
“ his own Name come and undertake to seduce you,
“ (such as *Simon Magus*) what Multitudes of you
“ *Jews* will follow him ? ’Tis not possible you should
“ believe aright, that are so much in love with the
“ Praise of Men, as to take him for a Prophet who
“ hath no other Testimony of himself that he is so, but
“ his own, or the Voice of other Men, and dare not
“ believe on me ; the Rulers for fear of the People,
“ and the People for fear of the Rulers ; and in the
“ mean while both contemn the Favour and Appro-
“ bation of God, and set his Testimony at nought,
“ and reject me who come authoriz’d with it. ’Tis
“ not so much I, to whom you have done this Affront,
“ and therefore I shall not bring any Complaint against
“ you before my Father ; but it is your own Prophet
“ *Moses*, on whom you pretend so much to depend,
“ that will rise up in Judgment, and testify against
“ you. Had you believed *Moses*, that Prophet whom
“ ye seem so much to value, his Predictions and
“ typical Representations would have led you to
“ believe on me, in whom they are all compleated.
“ But if your own *Moses* cannot prevail with you, I
“ can expect to carry no Weight or Authority with
“ you.”

Here was an excellent Admonition, mix’d with Love and Reproach, Terror and Tendernefs ; and tho’ the very worst that the *Jews* could then make of it must needs terminate in their own Good, yet the plainer he speaks, the more stupid and unintelligible they

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XII. ¹⁴
JESUS went on the Sabbath-day through the Corn.



ST MATTHEW 12 Verse 1. ⁶⁵
And his disciples were an hungred, and
began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.
But when the Pharisees saw it, they said

they are ; and the more fond he is in inviting them, the more obdurate and stubborn they are in rejecting him. Every Action, tho' tending to very considerable Relief and Advantage of some of them, still provokes them ; and every Word, tho' express'd with the most divine Gospel-Accent, raises the Scandal higher : For in the (*p*) second Sabbath after the first, that is, in the first Day of unleavened Bread, which happen'd the next Day after their weekly Sabbath, the Disciples passing thro' the Fields, and pressed with Hunger, pluck'd some ripe Ears of Corn, and rubbing them in their Hands did eat them, to satisfy their craving Appetites. The malicious Pharisees greedily catch at every Occasion of quarrelling with him, or those that belong'd to him : Why do ye eat, say they to the Disciples, before the publick Service, which thing ought not to be done on Sabbath Days, especially on such a Day as this, the Feast of *Pentecost* ? Our Saviour undertakes the Argument, and answers for his Disciples, putting them in mind what *David* did, and those that were with him, in the Case of Hunger, as this was, how he transgressed the Law of Holy Things ; hereby offering to satisfy their Scruples, and to convince them that Works of Necessity are sometimes to be permitted, even to the Breach of a positive temporary Constitution or Law ; and that Acts of Mercy are the best and most acceptable Methods of serving God upon any Day whatsoever, or any Part of the Day that is vacant to other Offices, and proper for a religious Festival.

But this was talking to the deaf Winds ; neither Reason nor Religion will give them Satisfaction ; they are so enraged that nothing but his Destruction will please. Therefore Jesus knowing the Wickedness of their

(*p*) *Second Sabbath, &c.* When any of the solemn yearly Feasts fell on the Sabbath-day, that Sabbath had a special extraordinary Respect attributed to it, and was called sometimes a great Sabbath, and a great Day of Sabbath, *John* 19-31. In the Morning therefore of the

Day of *Pentecost*, falling on a Sabbath-day, by which Conjunction that Day became an high Sabbath ; this Dispute about the eating the Ears of Corn happen'd. This Feast of *Pentecost* in *Exod.* 23. 16. is called the Feast of Harvest.

Hearts, withdrew from *Jerusalem*, and returned to *Galilee*, whither the Scribes and Pharisees pursue him ; their keen-scented Malice will not let him rest, but follows him wherever he goes, observing every Action, especially whether he would prosecute that which they called the Profanation of their Sabbath, by doing Acts of Mercy upon that Day. Their Malice is soon gratified with an Opportunity : For entering into one of the Synagogues of *Galilee* upon the Sabbath, he cast his Eye upon a (q) Man whose Right-Hand was withered. Here was an Object offered to his Compassion, which never fail'd to exert itself, especially on such a deplorable Occasion. The quick-sighted Malice of his Enemies soon snatched at the Opportunity, and lest he should not answer their End, they start the Question first, asking him, Whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath-Day ? Jesus knew their Thoughts, and had an Answer ready for them : But first confronts them with the Object, bidding the Man with the wither'd Hand to stand forth in the midst of the Assembly, that every one might see him. This Object was sufficient to move Pity in any but a *Jewish* Breast, and rather put the whole Congregation upon an Address and Petition of imploring Help from the Heavenly Physician upon this poor Wretch, than to make him an Occasion of insinaring and accusing him. Jesus therefore puts the Question home to them, making the Case partly their own : *Is it lawful, says he, on the Sabbath-Day to do Good, or to do Evil ? To save Life, or to destroy it ?* This was so apposite to the present Circumstance, and so convictive of their malicious Design upon him, that they had nothing to say for themselves. But Jesus pursues his Argument with a closer and more immediate Application to themselves : *Which of you, says he, shall have a Sheep fallen into a Pit on the Sabbath-Day, and will not lift it out ? How much better then is a Man than a Sheep ?* From whence he draws this plain Conclusion, *Wherefore is*

(q) St. *Jerome* reports this Man to have been a Mason,

is lawful to do Good on the Sabbath-Day? And knowing the Hardness of their Hearts, he waited not for an Answer, but hastens to the Relief of the poor Man, commanding him to stretch forth his Hand; which he did, and it was restored whole as the other. Upon this Act, being confirm'd in their Malice, the Pharisees went forth, and being with the (r) *Herodians*, they both conspire the Death of him who came to offer them eternal Life.

But hitherto their Malice could not reach him, he had not yet finished the Work his Father sent him to do: He therefore knowing their impious Designs on his Life, departs from thence again, and goes toward the Sea-Coast; the Numbers of People increasing wherever he goes, as his Fame did; for he was now followed by new Multitudes from *Galilee*, from *Judea*, from *Jerusalem*, from *Idumea*, from beyond *Jordan*, from about *Tyre* and *Sidon*; who in all Quarters hearing the Report of his miraculous Power to cure all Diseases by the Word of his Mouth, the Touch of his Hand, or the Handling his Garment, came with their Sick and Possessed for Help, who pressed hard on him but to touch him, and they were all immediately cured of their Distempers. Nay, his Fame so increased, that the very Devils and unclean Spirits publickly confessed that he was the Son of God, till they were upon all Occasions restrained, and compelled to silence.

The Multitude thronging from all Parts, and daily increasing, he commanded a Ship to be in readiness against any Inconvenience or troublesome Pressures of the People: After which he went up into a Mountain to pray, and continued in Prayer all Night, intend-

(r) *Herodians*. *Tertullian*, *Chrysostom*, *Jerom*, and several others very mistakenly say the *Herodians* were a Sect of People who said *Herod* was the *Messias*, because by a Decree of the *Roman Senate*, when the Sceptre departed from *Judah*, he was declared King. But it is very improbable that thirty Years after *Herod's* Death, there should be any of the Belief that *Herod* was the

Messias. The *Herodians* therefore here mentioned were Followers of *Herod*, in opposition to those that acknowledg'd and adher'd to the *Cæsarean* or *Roman Authority*, which the Pharisees generally look'd upon as an Usurpation. And yet the *Herodians* were not a distinct Sect from the Pharisees and Sadducees, as appears by comparing *Mat.* 23. 16. with *Mark* 8. 15.

ing to make the first Ordination of Apostles ; which the next Day he did, choosing out of the Number of his Disciples these Twelve to be (s) Apostles, *Simon Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*, *Philip* and *Bartholomew*, *Matthew* and *Thomas*, *James* the Son of *Alpheus*, and *Simon* the *Zenitot*, *Judas* the Brother of *James*, and *Judas Iscariot*. Having chosen them, he instructs them in the mysterious Parts of his holy Doctrine ; and seeing a great Multitude of People that were his constant Followers, he goes up into a Mountain, where in a more eminent Manner he sets upon his Prophetick Office, and addresses himself in general to the Apostles and the Multitude ; pronouncing the Blessing of the Kingdom of Heaven to the humble and lowly ; Comfort to those that mourn for their Sins ; Protection and Security of Life to those that live quietly and meekly ; a complete and perfect Satiety to those blessed Appetites that spiritually hunger and thirst after Righteousness ; Compassion and Mercy to those that are tenderly and pitifully affected towards the Miseries and Wants of the Distressed ; the beatifick Vision (or Sight of God) to those that have not defiled their Souls with fleshly Lusts and worldly Impurities ; the Portion and Blessing of the Children of God to those that love and labour for Peace ; the Martyr's glorious Crown to those that suffer for the Discharge of a good Conscience, and everlasting Praises to those that patiently bear the Calumnies and Reproaches of the Wicked for Christ's sake.

Afterwards giving particular Instructions to his Apostles and Disciples, together with their Commissions, being now about to send them abroad, he says, “ You

(s) *apostolus*. The Word *apostle* in general signifies *Messenger*, or *sent* ; in which Sense the *Jesus* are said to have Apostles, whom they deputed to act as their Proxies or Deputies : Whence the *Jeruzalem* Proverb, *Every Man's Apostle is a Impost* ; that is, as his Vicar or Proxy, and what he doth as valid as if the Person had done it himself. And in this Sense the Twelve after Christ's Departure had others, whom they sent to

act for them in their Charge, and whom they called their Apostles.

In an evangelical Sense the Word *Apostle* signifies primarily that Office whereunto the Twelve were set apart by Christ immediately ; as also that of St. *Paul* and *Barabas*, sent by the especial Appointment of the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 13. 2. Secondly, it belonged to some others after, that received the like Commission from the Twelve, or St. *Paul*.

“ my Disciples, and all Christians, are the Salt of the
“ Earth ; ye are those that by your Doctrine, exem-
“ plary Piety, and Charity, are to keep the World from
“ putrifying : But if your Lives grow unfavoury by
“ corrupt Living, ye will be the most unprofitable,
“ contemptible Creatures in the World ; will be the
“ Refuse of the Earth, and dealt with accordingly. Ye
“ are the Light of the World, like a City set on a Hill,
“ which is seen by all that travel near it, and by them
“ inquired after what it is ; so the Church of Christ,
“ which is a most conspicuous Society, cannot fail be-
“ ing taken notice of by the rest of the World, and ei-
“ ther attract them by their good, or discourage them
“ by their bad Examples. It is my Design in you to set
“ up a Torch or Luminary, that by the Doctrine which
“ ye shall preach, and the exemplary Lives ye are to
“ lead, ye shall direct all others in the Actions of their
“ Lives. Let your Light therefore so shine before
“ Men, that you may recommend all others to the
“ Practice of your honest, honourable and pious Acti-
“ ons. I come not to take any Thing away from the
“ moral Duties prescrib’d in the Law, or by the Pro-
“ phets, but to repair and make up whatsoever is want-
“ ing ; to restore what hath been taken from it by false
“ Interpretations ; and to increase and add to the Law
“ till the World be destroyed, and all Things come to
“ an End ; no one least Particle shall be taken from the
“ Law, or lose its Force and Obligation. * Whosoever
“ by his Practice or Doctrine goes about to evacuate
“ any one of the least Commands of the Law, he shall
“ be thought unworthy of having his Name registred
“ in the Catalogue of Christians here, or Saints here-
“ after. But whosoever shall practise and teach others
“ the Duties of it, shall be advanc’d to the Dignity of
“ judging others, and to the Glory attending it in
“ Heaven. Except your Righteousness shall exceed
“ the ordinary Practice of the Scribes and Pharisees,
“ ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. *Moses*
“ delivered to the *Jews*, that they should commit no

“ Murder, and that he who did should be obnoxious
 “ to capital Punishment: But I say, the Law is short
 “ in this, for whoever is angry with his Brother (t)
 “ without a Cause, or calls him Racha, or Fool, shall
 “ be in danger of Judgment, or of the Council, or of
 “ Hell-fire. Presume not to approach the Altar with
 “ thy Peace-offering, unreconciled to thy Brother. Be
 “ not litigious, lest thy Adversary accuse thee before
 “ the Judge, and thou be cast into Prison. The Law
 “ forbids Adultery, but I say, he that looks lustfully
 “ on a Woman, that gazes intemperately on a beauti-
 “ ful Face, tho’ he satisfies not his Flesh, yet by that
 “ very lustful Look, hath for his part made himself
 “ guilty of Adultery on her. Thou hadst better be with-
 “ out thy Hand or thy Eye (tho’ never so useful Instru-
 “ ments of Nature) than to be ensnared by them. Thou
 “ shalt not put away thy Wife but for Fornication,
 “ otherwise thou makest her commit Adultery. All
 “ voluntary Swearing, tho’ by the meanest Thing
 “ or Creature, is interdicted thee; and in thy com-
 “ mon Conversation thou shalt use no more than a bare
 “ Affirmative or Negative, Yea, or No. Oppose not
 “ Violence to the injurious Man, but whoever shall
 “ use thee contumeliously, (v) bear it patiently: Pa-
 “ tience for the present, and Dependence on God’s
 “ Providence for the future, do best become a Christi-
 “ an. If any one by Suit at Law shall endeavour to
 “ rob thee of thy meaner or inner Garment, do thou

(t) *Without a Cause.* The Prophets and Apostles, and Jesus Christ himself, in citing the Writings of Moses, do seldom or never express his very Words, thinking it sufficient to give the true Sense or Meaning of them. Thus Moses commands, *to serve the Lord*, but our Saviour makes no scruple to add the Word *only*, which is likewise to be extended to the Precept of worshipping him, as the Devil himself did acknowledge. Nay, it is sometimes absolutely necessary, for making up a complete Sense, to supply some Words which have gone before, or follow after. As when our Saviour in this place says, *Be not angry with thy*

Brother without a Cause, and afterwarde in the same Verse forbids to call him *curst Wretch*, or *Racha*, that is, to give him ill or reproachful Names, it is plain that we are to add *without a Cause*. For our Saviour himself, whose Life was a Comment upon his Doctrine, was often angry, and treated the Pharisees and Sadducees more than once with the worst of Names, calling them *blind*, *Fools*, *whited Sepulchres*, *Hypocrites*, and *Children of the Devil*; which he cannot be supposed to do without a Cause.

(v) *Bear.* To turn the Cheek is a proverbial Saying, and signifies bearing a Wrong or Injury patiently.

“ rather

“ rather than oppose Violence to his Injustice, suffer
 “ the Loss of thy upper better Garment: And who-
 “ ever shall make thee (*w*) go and carry his Burden a
 “ little Way, do thou again, rather than permit thy
 “ Passion to oppose Violence to this Injury, or light
 “ Invasion of thy Liberty, suffer as much more. Do not
 “ proudly or disdainfully turn away from him that asks
 “ a Favour of thee. *Moses’s* Precept indeed concern-
 “ ing the kind Dealing of the *Jews* with other Men,
 “ extended not universally to all, but peculiarly to
 “ their own Countrymen and Fellow-*Jews* (called the
 “ Sons of thy People) but to (*x*) Aliens and Enemies
 “ they were not bound to be kind; but I say unto
 “ you, love your Enemies, return Blessings and Pray-
 “ ers for Curses and Reproaches; for if you have or-
 “ dinary Charity for them that have the same to you,
 “ what Reward can ye expect from God for so doing?
 “ The worst Sort of Men in the World will do so;
 “ and ye do not distinguish your selves from the com-
 “ mon People. Therefore I require of you that will be
 “ my Disciples, that you exercise your Charity, whe-
 “ ther of the lowest or highest Sort, and extend it as
 “ far as the Mercy of God is extended, to Enemies as
 “ well as Friends, that in so doing you may be (*y*)
 “ perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

“ Be not charitable for the sake of Applause, for
 “ thereby you will lose the Reward which God in
 “ Heaven hath laid up for the Almsgiver. But when
 “ thou dost any Act of Mercy, do it not vainglorious-
 “ ly but privately, and thou wilt certainly enjoy the
 “ Reward of thy secret Piety, which God will openly
 “ bestow on thee in the Sight of Men and Angels.

(*w*) *Go.* What we render *go a Mile*, is a *Persian* Word and Custom, which signifies *to take up Men*, as we take up Horses to carry our Burdens from Stage to Stage; which when one hath performed, another is taken up in his stead for the next Stage.

(*x*) *Aliens.* The *Jews* were so far from being oblig’d by the Law of *Moses*

to be kind or friendly to Foreigners, that they were commanded to treat the Seven Nations in an hostile Manner.

(*y*) *Perfect.* To imitate or equal God in all Things is impossible, and in some Things presumptuous; but in Acts of Mercy, Charity, and the like, we are expressly commanded to imitate him, as far as human Nature will permit.

“ When thou addressest thy self to God in Prayer,
 “ affect not popular Hypocrisy, in exposing thy self to
 “ the View of the Multitude, that thou mayst be ad-
 “ mired of them; but retire from worldly Company
 “ into thy Closet, and with thy Door shut to thee,
 “ pray to thy heavenly Father thus in secret, who,
 “ tho’ he be invisible, yet seeth thee, and will pub-
 “ lickly reward thy private Devotion. Avoid vain
 “ Repetitions, and lengthen not thy Prayers with idle
 “ Tautologies, after the manner of the Heathens, who
 “ think they shall have their Prayers granted for the
 “ Multiplicity of Words used by them in their Devo-
 “ tions. Be not therefore like them, for your Father
 “ hath no need of your Instructions to tell him your
 “ Wants, and is not likely to be wrought on by the
 “ Length of your Prayers. I will therefore set you a
 “ Pattern, after which you shall form your Prayers.
 “ When ye pray, say, (z) Our Father which art in
 “ Heaven; hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom
 “ come. Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Hea-
 “ ven. Give us this Day our daily Bread. And for-
 “ give us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors. And
 “ lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from
 “ Evil; for thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and
 “ the Glory, for ever. *Amen.*

“ Imitate not the Hypocrites in (a) Fasting, who
 “ put on mournful Looks, and appear in foul Gar-
 “ ments, that they may be thought to be in earnest;
 “ but behave thyself as upon another Day, that thou
 “ appear not unto Men to fast, but unto God.

“ Lay not up any worldly Treasure, which is lia-
 “ ble either to Rust, Vermin, or Thieves; but lay up
 “ Treasure in Heaven, where it will be for ever safe.

(z) *Our Father.* This Prayer is dis-
 tinct from that in St. *Luke* 11. 2. for this
 in St. *Mat.* 6. 9. is part of Christ’s fa-
 mous Sermon on the Mount; but that in
 St. *Luke* upon a special Motion of the
 Disciples, at a time when he had done
 praying, who seeing him often retire to
 pray, desired him to give them a Form

of Prayer, which they might constantly
 use, as *John Baptist* had given to his
 Disciples. This Prayer in St. *Matthew*
 was in the second Year after Christ’s
 Baptism, that in St. *Luke* in the third.

(a) *Fasting.* The *Jews* anointed and
 washed themselves every Day, except
 in time of mourning.

“ Where

“ Where Covetousness hath taken Possession, there is
 “ nothing but Darknes ; for Liberality and Charity
 “ are extinguished by it ; and that which tends to
 “ the Increase of Riches, cannot be reconcilable with
 “ the Service of God.

“ Be not anxious or solicitous for the future ; it is
 “ doubting of God’s Providence, which will not fail
 “ to supply our Necessities, if we trust in him. The
 “ Fowls of the Air are a great instance of his Care,
 “ who provide nothing, and yet enjoy every Thing.

“ Be not hasty in judging others, lest thou fall un-
 “ der their more severe Censure. Why shouldst thou
 “ reflect so sharply on the Faults of others, who art
 “ more liable to their Censure for thy own Follies ?
 “ Be cautious in reprovng the incorrigible, who will
 “ be apt to reproach thee for thy charitable Love, as
 “ (b) Swine undervalue precious Jewels, and Dogs
 “ bite those that feed them. Apply your selves to
 “ God in Prayer for what you want, which will be a
 “ sure Way of obtaining it. Enter in at the strait
 “ Gate ; let all your Care be to set your selves upon
 “ the Christian Course, be it ever so strict (for it is
 “ easy to enter on a vicious Course, and go thro’
 “ with it, and there are Multitudes that pass that
 “ Way to eternal Destruction). But the Gate that
 “ leadeth to Life being strait, there will be need of all
 “ your Care, because the Entrance and whole Course
 “ of a Christian’s Life is made up of perfect Strictness,
 “ in opposition to the Looseness of the World ; and
 “ that makes so few to choose it.

“ Beware of false Prophets and Teachers, who pre-
 “ tend the greatest Innocence and Meekness, but de-
 “ sign the contrary. Ye will discover them by their
 “ Practices : For when they have gained some Es-
 “ teem with you, they will endeavour to corrupt you.

“ They that in Words take upon them to be the
 “ only Servants, Sons and Saints of God, as Here-
 “ ticks and Schismatics ordinarily do, yet these

(b) *Matt. 7. 6.*

“ Words of theirs, and their confident calling on God,
“ are not such Fruits by which you can judge well of
“ them ; for it is not every one that believeth on me,
“ who acknowledgeth me, or looketh for Salvation
“ from me. At the Day of Judgment many will say
“ to me, Lord, we are the Men whom thou by thy
“ Power hast enabled to cast out Devils, and do all
“ kind of Miracles. But I shall tell such, I never
“ knew them.

“ Whosoever believeth and entertaineth all these
“ Things contained in this Sermon, and practiseth
“ them, he is like a prudent Builder, who laid the
“ Foundation of his House upon a Rock, which Wind
“ and Weather could no way affect with Injury or
“ Damage. But he that heareth these Things, and
“ practiseth them not, shall by all Men be reputed to
“ be like the Man who built his House upon the Sand,
“ which was soon blown down by the stormy Winds,
“ and washed away by the Floods.”

Our blessed Lord having finished his Sermon on the Mount, the People were astonished at him, for he delivered his Doctrine with extraordinary Authority and Power, prophetick at least, (which since the Prophet *Malachi's* Time had been interrupted) and not with that Indifference as was practis'd by the Doctors of the Law among the *Jews*.

Nor did the Multitudes resort to him only for the sake of his Doctrine, but also of the miraculous Cures, which he daily wrought among them ; which had so spread and increas'd his Fame, that all that were afflicted with any Disease or Malady, if they could but approach him, doubted not of a Cure. Among the admiring Crouds which continually flock'd about him, a poor leprous Wretch all over crusted with Ulcers, threw himself at the Feet of the Divine Physician, imploring his Help, and with a faithful Assurance depending on his Ability to restore him to his Health, if he would be pleas'd to make use of his Power. Our Saviour looking on the poor Leper with Pity, confirms his
his

ST MATTHEW CHAP. VIII. ⁷⁵
 JESUS healeth the Centurions servant.



ST MATTHEW 8. Verse 5. 6. 75.
*When Jesus was entered into Capernaum,
 there came unto him a Centurion, beseeching
 him, and saying, 'Lord, my servant' etc.*
 ——— 2d S. of Epiph. Pl 2d ———

his Faith by an instant Cure ; at the same time commanding him to make an Acknowledgment of the great Blessing he had receiv'd, by addressing himself to the Priest, as the Law prescribed, and to offer the Offering required of all such as are thus cleansed of Leprosy. This our Saviour said to him with Design, that it might by this Means be a Testimony to assure them that he was the *Messias*, that he was God, and that he opposed not the Law given by *Moses*, but came to fulfill it. The joyful Leper in a willing Obedience retires, and our Blessed Lord enters *Capernaum*, which he makes a fresh Scene of his miraculous Performances : for he is no sooner discovered to be in any Place, but immediate Application is made to him for his divine Assistance and farther Demonstration of his Power.

In *Capernaum* the Holy Jesus received the Address of a faithful (c) Centurion, or Captain, in behalf of his favourite Servant, who was grievously afflicted with the Palsy. Our Blessed Lord, always as ready to relieve, as we to ask, proposeth to the Centurion the Honour of his immediate Presence to visit his Servant ; which the faithful Commander in all Humility declines ; and being unwilling to give him the Trouble of coming in Person, desires only his sacred Fiat, the Word of Command, and he firmly believed the Cure perform'd. For thro' Strength of Faith he was assured of the Excellency and Divinity of his Saviour ; and therefore, tho' himself was a Man in Power, he thought it too great an Honour for his earthly Habitation to be visited by the great Saviour of the World. (d) Jesus with Pleasure and Admiration observing the believing Captain, turns to his Disciples, to whom he with much Earnestness of Asseveration expresses himself, assuring them, that he had not found any *Jew* so fully persuaded of his Power, as this *Gentile* Centurion. But this which is now so very admirable,

(c) Centurion. He was a Captain quartered in *Judea*.
of the *Iron Legion*, which usually

(d) See *Mat.* 8. 10, 11, 12, &c,
will

will within a short Time be frequently exemplified; for Multitudes shall come in from all parts of the World, and believe in Christ, and shall sit down with *Abraham*, and the rest of the Patriarchs of the *Jewish* Nation; but the *Jews* themselves, to whom the *Messias* was primarily sent, will disbelieve, and be punished accordingly; they will be shut out of the Church here and Heaven hereafter. Then turning to the Centurion, who with Joy and Patience heard Jesus talking, he pronounces the Servant cured, and dismisses the Master of him, to the Enjoyment of that Satisfaction which his Faith had procured him. The miraculous Cure was in proportion to his Faith; for returning, he found upon Inquiry, that his Servant recovered the same time that Jesus had declared it. Thus the Servant received the Blessing of Health, as the Reward and Honour of his Master's Faith.

From *Capernaum* Jesus passing thro' *Galilee* attended with a great Multitude of People, as he came near the Gates of *Naim*, is met by a Croud as numerous as his own, mournfully attending the dead Corps of an only Son of a Widow, by which Loss the poor Mother was deprived of all worldly Comfort. Here was a proper Object for the Divinity to exercise itself upon, and to which our Blessed Saviour's Compassion readily prompted him. To comfort the weeping Parent therefore, he approaches the Bier, bids the Widow forbear weeping, and commands the Bearers to stop, when with his powerful Word and Touch, he raises the young Man to Life; who sitting up in the Bier spake to the Company, to convince them that he was brought to Life again. To restore decayed Health, and dispossess Devils and impure Spirits, were Acts of Wonder to all that saw them; but to recover defunct Nature, and to recall it from the Hands of Death, was so stupendous a Prodigy, as struck the Beholders not only with Amazement, but Fear: for they glorified God for visiting his People, by sending a great Prophet among them; justly concluding from
the

ST MATTHEW CHAP XI ¹⁶
JESUS spake of concerning John.



ST MATTHEW ⁷⁷ Verse 7
*What went ye out into the wilder-
ness to see? A Reed Shaken with the
wind.*

the Grandness of the Action, that nothing but an Almighty Power could do such Things.

Upon the Fame of this and other Miracles, which soon spread thro' all *Judea*, *John the Baptist*, who was still in Prison, sent two of his Disciples to him, to minister Occasions of his greater Publication, inquiring if he were the *Messias*, or whether they were to expect another? At the very Time of their asking this Question, for their clearer Conviction and Proof of his being the *Messias*, (e) Jesus perform'd many Miracles in their Presence, curing many of their Infirmities and Plague, and of evil Spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave Sight. To these Messengers therefore of *John* he return'd no Answer, but a Demonstration of the Nature of the Thing, and the Glory of the Miracles, saying, *Return to John and tell him what you see; for the Deaf hear, the Blind see, the Lamæ walk, the Dead are raised, the Lepers are cleansed, and to the Poor the Gospel is preached.* All which were the grand characteristick Notes of the *Messias*, according to the Predictions of the holy Prophets.

Our Blessed Saviour having dismissed *John's* Disciples with this Answer, began to speak concerning *John*, giving a large Encomium of the Austerity and Holiness of his Person, the Greatness of his Function, and Divinity of his Commission: Saying that he was greater than a Prophet, a burning and shining Light, the *Elias* that was to come, and the Consummation and Ending of the old Prophets: Adding withal, that the Perverseness of that Age was most notorious in the Entertainment of himself and the Baptist: For neither could the Baptist, who came neither eating nor drinking (that by his Austerity and mortified Deportment he might invade the Judgment and Affections of the People) nor Jesus, who came both eating and drinking (that by a moderate and affable Life, fram'd to the common Use and Compliance of Men, he might sweetly insinuate into the Affections of the Multitude) ob-

(e) See *Luke* 7. 21, 22. &c.

tain Belief amongst them. The obstinate *Jews* object against every Thing, and nothing could please them : But Wisdom and Righteousness had a Theatre in its own Family, and is justified of all her Children.

Then he proceeds to a more applied Reprehension of *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum*; telling the two first, that if the mighty Works which were done in them by him, had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, (two Heathen Cities) they would long ago have repented ; and therefore the Judgment or Punishment which befalls mere Heathen Cities, shall be easier than what they could expect. And thou *Capernaum*, says he, the Place of my Abode, which hast been so honoured and favoured by me, beyond all other Places, and hast received such spiritual Advantages, shalt be brought to Destruction suddenly, humbled as low as thou wert highly advanced ; for if the Miracles done in thee with design to reform thee, had been done in *Lot's* Time, for the reforming *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, they would have prevented their Destruction by a speedy Repentance.

Having thus severely reprehended the three Cities for their pertinacious continuing in their Sins and Infidelity, in Defiance and Reproof of all the mighty Works which had been wrought in them, he takes occasion at the same time (probably from that of his being received by the meaner, and refused by the higher Sort) to break out into an affectionate Expression of Thanks to God, that those Mysteries of the Gospel, which the wise Men of the World despised (and were thereupon given up by God to their own wilful Blindness) were yet by him revealed to the most ignorant and mean ; by this denoting, that God had so dispos'd the Way to Heaven, that the most ignorant and humble, not the most proud and elated, were most ready to receive and embrace it. This, said the Blessed Jesus, is an Act of thy free and undeserved Mercy to some, O Lord, and of thy just Desertion to others. Then he concludes this Sermon with an Invitation to all People wearied and disconsolate, loaden with Sin and Misery,

Misery, to come to him, promising Ease to their Burdens and Refreshment to their Weariness, and to exchange their heavy Pressures for an easy Yoke and a light Burden.

The Holy Jesus having ended this Sermon, a certain wealthy Pharisee, named *Simon*, invited him to dine with him : into whose House being entred, a (f) Woman that had liv'd in a sinful and scandalous Course of Life, abiding there in the City, heard of it. She came to Jesus in the Pharisee's House ; not to glut her Eyes with the Sight of a miraculous and glorious Person, but in Remorse and Regret for her Sins. She came to the Blessed Jesus to lay her Burden at his Feet ; and as he lay along, she came behind him that lay next to Jesus, and standing there, let fall some Drops of Tears upon his Feet, Effects of her Sorrow and Love ; and stooping down, wiped them with no other Towel than that of her own Hair : Then she fell down and kissed his Feet, and poured a Box of Ointment upon them. This Action was a perfect Ecstasy of Love, Sorrow and Adoration ; a festival Ceremony, becoming the Majesty of the greatest earthly Monarch.

Whilst this poor Sinner was busy in the Expressions of her Religion and Veneration to Jesus, *Simon* his Host, in whom something of the perverse peevish Pharisee still appear'd, thought with himself, that Jesus could not be a Prophet ; otherwise he would have known this Woman to be a (g) Sinner, and not have suffer'd her to touch him. Which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his Thoughts as well as his Words) he

(f) *Woman*. This Woman was *Mary Magdalen*. She had been married to a noble Personage, a Native of the Town and Castle of *Magdal*, from whence she took her Name of *Magdalen*, tho' she her self was born in *Bethany*. She was a Widow, and being prompted by her Wealth, Liberty and Youth, to an intemperate Life, and too free Entertainments, had become very scandalous.

(g) *Sinner*. Tho' the *Jewish* Religion did permit Harlots of their own

Nation to live and enjoy the Privileges of their Nation, except that their Oblations were refused ; yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater Degree of Sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil Usages, or the Benefits of ordinary Society ; and thought Religion it self, and the Honour of a Prophet, was concern'd in the Interests of the same Superciliousness : And therefore *Simon* the Pharisee made this Objection within himself.

immediately

immediately makes an Apology for the Woman and himself, in a civil Question expressed in a Parable of two Debtors, to whom a greater and a less Debt respectively were forgiven ; both of them concluding that they would love their Creditor in proportion to his Mercy in forgiving their Debts. In this Parable, Jesus gave the Reason of this Woman's extraordinary Expression of Love and Grief, and an Account of not rejecting her. Then applying it to the Woman, he reproaches his Host by distinguishing between his and the Woman's Entertainment ; concluding the Parable with Forgiveness proportionable to her Sins ; for she, who loved much, had much to be forgiven. This was so home and plain upon the proud Pharisee, that he might therein read his own Incivilities and inhospitable Entertainment, when it stood confronted with the Magnificency of *Mary Magdalen's* Penance and Charity. Dinner being over, Jesus dismisses the penitent Woman with this Blessing : *This great and affectionate Expression of thy extraordinary Faith is rewarded with a free Pardon of all thy Sins : Go, and live as thou oughtest to do for the rest of thy Life, and God's Favour and all Happiness be with thee.*

After this, Jesus attended with the Twelve, with *Mary Magdalen, Joanna, Susanna*, and many others, who supplied him with Necessaries out of their own Possessions, went thro' the whole Country, preaching the glad Tidings of the Kingdom of God : And coming into an House with a Design to eat, he was so crouded by the People that he could not ; and therefore he disposed himself to dispense his Time to the Necessities of those that stood in need of his Help. Of which there were many and daily Instances ; and with one of which he was presented in the Person of a poor Demoniack, possessed with a blind and dumb Devil ; in whose behalf his Friends intreated Jesus, that he would cast out the Devil : Which he immediately did, and the blind Man saw, and the dumb spake ; so much to the Amazement of the People, that they
ran

ran in so prodigious Companies after him, and so scandalized the Pharisees, who thought that by the means of this Prophet, their Reputation would be lessen'd, and their Schools empty, that first a Rumour was scatter'd up and down from an uncertain Ground, but communicated with Tumult and apparent Noises, that Jesus was beside himself. Upon which Rumour, his Friends and Kindred came together to see, and to make some Provisions accordingly. When the Mother of Jesus and his Kindred came, they found him in an House, incircled with a Croud of People full of Wonder and Admiration. And there it was that the Holy Virgin-Mother might hear Part of her own Prophecy literally verified, *That the Generations of the Earth should call her Blessed*: For a Woman worshipping Jesus, cry'd, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps that gave thee suck*. To this Jesus replied, not denying her to be highly Blessed, who had received the Honour of being the Mother of the *Messias*; but advancing the Dignities of Spiritual Excellencies far above the greatest Temporal Honour in the World, he says; *Yea, rather blessed are they that bear the Word of God and perform it*.

Our Blessed Saviour being still in the House, they told him that his Mother and his Brethren stay'd without for him; upon which he told them, those Relations were less than the Ties of Duty and Religion: For the dear Names of Mother and Brother, which are sanctified by the Laws of God and Nature, are made far more sacred when a Spiritual Kindred does supervene. And therefore Christ, to signify this Office of his to declare the Will of his Father, to be dearer to him than all Relations, and withal to shew, that Obedience to God was above all Things most welcome to him, he tells them, that natural and secular Respects sway not with him in comparison of the gaining Profelytes to Heaven. And turning to his Disciples said, *Behold my Mother and my Brethren*; subjoining for a Reason, *Whosoever doth the Will of my Father which*

is in Heaven, becomes thereby the Child of God, and consequently by that means the Brother and Sister of Christ; on whom he setteth a greater Value, than paying a Civility to those, who are in carnal Respects nearer to him.

The Pharisees, who were always pickeering for Occasions of finding fault with our Blessed Lord, seeing him continue doing Miracles, and especially dispossessing Devils, renew the old Quarrel; He casteth out Devils by *Beelzebub*. Which senseless Objection Christ having confuted, he charg'd them highly upon the Guilt of an unpardonable Crime; telling them that their so charging those Actions of his, which he perform'd in the Virtue of the Divine Spirit, was a Sin against the Holy Ghost. And however they might make bold with the (*b*) Son of Man, and that Prevarications against his Words, or Injuries to his Person might upon Repentance and Baptism find a Pardon; yet it was a Matter of greater Consideration to sin against the Holy Ghost, for that would find no Pardon here, or hereafter: And taking occasion upon this and other Occasions of reprehending the *Jews* for their Obstinacy and Ingratitude, he, by a mysterious and ingenious Parable, gives the World great Caution against lapsing and backsliding after Repentance: “ To you (says he) that having receiv'd such
“ Means of converting and bringing you to Repen-
“ tance, such Miracles, and particularly casting out

(*b*) *Son of Man*. The Phrase *Son of Man*, in *Mat.* 12. 32. belongs to Christ as he appeared in the Weakness of human Nature, the Son of *Mary*, abstracted from the great Power of his Doctrine and Miracles. The Sin therefore against the *Son of Man* was pardonable; but the resisting and opposing (which is often express'd by *speaking*) the Holy Ghost was unpardonable here and hereafter.

The quality of the *Son of Man* is often very ambiguous; and therefore we must take these Words, *Son of Man*, in their proper Signification, and retain them still where our Saviour is evidently understood, who has been pleased to take this Title particularly to himself.

Sometimes it signifies Jesus Christ, sometimes a Man of low Degree; as in *Matthew* 8. 10. and here in *Mat.* 12. 32. This is likewise the Sense of it, as many of the Learned allow, in *1 Sam.* 2. 25. But that which renders this Interpretation more probable is this; that *St. Mark* makes no mention of the Blasphemy against the *Son of Man*, saying only, that *all Sins and Blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the Sons of Men*, *Mark* 3. 28. which shews that there is no Question here of a particular Sin against the Son of God, which *St. Mark* had not fail'd to have mention'd if any such Thing had been meant by that Expression.

“ Devils,

ST MARK CHAP. IV.

27

JESUS said, behold, there went out a sower to sow.



ST MARK 4 Verse 3. 4. 83.

And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

“ Devils, have not yet been worthy of them, I shall
 “ now apply this Parable, *Matthew* 12. 43, &c. the
 “ Meaning of which is, That this Nation (out of
 “ which I came to cast the Power of Satan, to bind
 “ the strong Man, and to take from him his usurp’d
 “ Possessions) doth appear so resolute to resist all my
 “ Methods, as to blaspheme that Holy Spirit by
 “ whom I work : And then what is to be expected,
 “ but that the Devils ejected by me, in my Father’s
 “ Name, finding no where among the Heathens such
 “ desirable Habitations of Rest and Contentment as
 “ among you, shall endeavour to re-enter here, with
 “ others worse than themselves, and take a lasting Pos-
 “ session ? So the last Estate of this People is like to
 “ be more desperately damnable than it was at first.”

The same Day our Blessed Lord went to the (i) Sea-
 side, where being again encompass’d with a mighty
 Concourse of People, he went on board a Ship, from
 whence he taught the People on the Shore : But he
 taught them by Parables, under which were hidden the
 Mysteries of the Kingdom of Life. By the Parable
 of the Sower scattering the Seed by the Way-side, and
 some on stony, some on thorny, and some on good
 Ground, he intimated the several Capacities and Dis-
 positions of Men’s Hearts, the Carelessness of some,
 the Frowardness and Levity of others, the Easiness
 and Softness of a third, and how they are diverted from
 their true Duty by Worldliness and Cares ; how ma-
 ny Ways there are to miscarry, and that but one Sort
 of Men receive the Word, and bring forth the Fruits
 of a holy Life. But his Disciples, wondering that he
 should speak so mystically and obscurely to the People,
 asked him, why he did so ? And he gave them this An-
 swer : “ To understand the higher and obscurer Parts
 “ of the Gospel is a Privilege only belonging to you
 “ Disciples, who are Believers already, and have un-
 “ dertaken to direct your Lives according to the Rules

(i) *Sea-side.* This was the Lake of *Tiberias*, from a Town of that Name,
Genesareth, otherwise called the Sea of which stood on the Banks of the Lake.

“ of my Doctrine communicated to you ; but these,
 “ which have not done so, are not yet fit for revealing
 “ of Secrets to them, but to be incited by the Dark-
 “ ness of Parables, to inquire into the Meaning of
 “ them. Whosoever hath made use of any Degree of
 “ Grace or Knowledge given him by God, shall have
 “ more given him, as in the Seed that fell on good
 “ Ground, he shall have an abundant Increase ; but
 “ whosoever shall not make use of what he hath, and
 “ so by his own Fault falleth into Poverty, he shall
 “ not only be denied more, but shall be deprived of
 “ what he hath ; the Means of Grace shall be taken
 “ from him upon his wilful Continuance in Sin, and all
 “ Degrees of it.” This was the Reason our Saviour
 gave his Disciples for his speaking in Parables, to
 which he subjoins another : “ I spake, says he, to them
 in Parables, (k) because seeing they see not, and
 “ hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
 “ By which was fulfilled what *Isaiab* the Prophet fore-
 “ told of God’s dealing with an obstinate People,
 “ who would not receive or entertain the Truth,
 “ tho’ never so plainly represented to them. And
 “ this was a just Judgment of God upon them for their
 “ former Obstinacy, who shut their Eyes, and stop-

(k) *Because, &c.* Tho’ our blessed Lord spake to the People in the most plain and intelligible manner, yet they were so stupid, as not to perceive and understand him. These Texts of St. *Mat.* 13. 13. St. *Mark* 4. 12 and St. *Luke* 8. 10. do in the *Greek* all agree ; but are differently and wrongly translated in the *English*, and seem to make our Saviour speak to the Multitude in Parables, that is, in a plain and familiar Way, that they may not perceive or understand them ; which is contrary to the Design of Christ’s coming into the World, and continuing so long in it ; which was to reform Mankind, and, by his holy Life and heavenly Doctrine, to turn Men from their wicked Ways, and put them in the Way that leads to eternal Happiness. The Mistake in the Translation must proceed from the false

rendring the Word *ina* in St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke*, which St. *Matthew* expresses by *buti*, both which Words signify in this Place *because*. That of St. *Mark* therefore ought literally to run thus : *Because seeing they do see, and not perceive, and so on* : That of St. *Luke* thus : *Because seeing they see not, and hearing they understand not*. But St. *Matthew* is positively most expressive ; *Because they seeing see not, and so on*. The natural Import of which is, That the *Jews*, by reason of their Prejudices, not being capable to understand high Things, our Saviour, out of love to their Souls, accommodates himself to their Capacities, by speaking to them in Parables ; that is, in Metaphors and Similitudes borrow’d from temporal and bodily Things, to bring them to the understanding of his Doctrine.

“ ped

“ ped their Ears, that they might not be converted,
 “ and become capable of those Mercies God intended
 “ them ; for which God on his part would withdraw
 “ such precious Knowledge from them, that it might
 “ not be exposed to farther Contempt.”

By the three Parables of the Seed growing with the Tares, of the Mustard-seed swelling to a great Tree, and of a little Leaven qualifying the whole Lump, our Blessed Saviour signified the Increase of the Gospel under Persecution and Difficulties, and the Blessings upon the Apostolick Sermons. By the Kingdom of Heaven he means the State of the Gospel, which he likens to a Man that sow'd good Seed, among which an Enemy scatter'd Tares, and which the Servants offer to weed up ; but the good Man forbid it, because, says he, the Tares are so mixed with the Wheat, that one cannot be pull'd up, without endangering the other, especially when they are not perfectly discernable. Let them therefore both grow up together till Harvest, that is, till the Day of Judgment, when I will send the Reapers, that is, will appoint Angels as Officers to separate the Wheat from the Tares, meaning the Good from the Wicked.

The State of the Gospel is of such a growing procreative Nature, both in the World, and in the Heart of Man, where it is receiv'd, that it is fitly compared to a Grain (1) of Mustard ; which being one of the least Seeds that are, yet when it grows up prosperously, it becomes bigger than any thing that comes from a Seed, and among the *Jews* grows into a Tree with Boughs large enough for Birds to roost and lodge in.

Again, the Gospel hath such a secret invisible Influence on the Hearts of Men, to change and affect them

(1) *Mustard.* That a Mustard-seed grows into a Tree, is affirm'd by St. *Mat.* 13. 32. and St. *Luke* 13. 19. which must not be measured by what we see of this Seed among us, but by considering the *Hebrew* Soil and Climate, of which this is ordinarily affirmed among their Authors, who mention a Bough of a Mustard-tree that yielded

Wood enough to cover a little House. And whereas in St. *Matthew* it is said to be the least of all Seeds, tho' among us other Seeds may be found less than that, as Rue and Poppy, yet it does not necessarily follow it should be so there. However, it is apparent, that the Smallness of it was proverbial among the *Jews*.

and all their Actions, that it is properly resembled to Leaven, which is so thoroughly mix'd with the whole, that altho' it appeareth not in any Part of it visibly, yet every Part hath a Tincture from it.

By speaking thus in Parables, our Blessed Saviour fulfilled what was before spoken by the Prophetick (m) Psalmist: *I will open my Mouth in Parables, I will utter Things which have been kept secret from the Foundation of the World.* After this, he dismiss'd the Multitude, and retired into a House; where his Disciples, taking the Opportunity of Privacy there, desire him to (n) explain the former Parables to them, which he accordingly did, rendering them into their proper Meanings, adding to them two Parables more, concerning the Dignity of the Gospel: In the first of which he compares it to a Treasure hid in a Field, which a Man finding casually hid it again, and conceal'd it till he could get it into his Possession by buying the Field, for which he accounts no Price too dear.

In the second Parable, he compares the Gospel to a Jewel of vast Price; for to those who have follow'd the Study of Wisdom and the Practice of Holiness, the Gospel of Christ is as welcome as a rich Prize to a Merchant, who being in pursuit of rich Merchandize, and meeting with a Jewel of vast Price and fit for his Turn, disputes not the Price, but immediately sells all

(m) See Psalm 78. 2.

(n) Explain. By our Saviour's explaining all Things to his Disciples, when he was alone with him, we may understand that he instructed them in private in his Doctrine, enlarged on the Meaning of the Parables, and likewise inform'd them of several other Things which were neither necessary nor convenient to be known by the Multitude at that Time: so that this Expression of St. Mat. 13. 35. *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not,* does not in the least imply, that our Saviour's Parables were dark or obscure, and that by speaking to the Multitude in them, he had a Design to conceal any Truth which

was necessary to be known by them; but only that he made a fuller Discovery of his Doctrine to his Disciples, than to the Multitude; because his Disciples were more disposed to receive it, and were afterwards to be the Preachers of it, and to seal the Truth of it with their Blood. Nor is it any Proof of the Obscurity of our Saviour's Parables, that the Disciples did not understand some of them: For tho' they were honest and sincere, and piously disposed, yet they were often at a Loss in ordinary Things, of which their not understanding the Parable of the Sower seems to be an Instance, for which our Saviour upbraids them, saying, *Know ye not this Parable? How then will ye know all Parables?*

that

that he hath in the World, and purchaseth it : Telling his Disciples withal, that altho' Purity and spiritual Perfections were intended by the Gospel, yet they would not be acquired by every Person ; but that the publick Professors of Christianity should be a mixed Multitude, like a Net inclosing Fishes good and bad ; which should be distinguish'd, the good to be preserv'd, and the bad to be cast away. Likewise the same Distinction would be observed, not only at the Time wherein Christ should come to work his Revenge upon his Enemies at the Destruction of the *Jewish* State, but especially at the final Day of every Man's Doom, at the Conclusion of the World.

After these Discourses, he retired into his own City of *Nazareth*, where he was bred, and taught the People publickly in their Synagogues, which he did in an extraordinary Manner, expressing such Knowledge, and doing such Miracles, that they who saw and heard him, were amazed at them ; and they that knew his Birth and Education amongst them could not but admire, saying, Whence can he be imagined to derive the Power of doing such Miracles ? Do we not know him, his Parents, and Relations ? The People of *Nazareth* did him no Honour as a Prophet : They regarded his Birth here below, but not his Commission from Heaven, tho' he evinced plainly by his miraculous Acts from whom he came : They would know him in nothing but the Disadvantages of his Youth, Kindred, Trade, and Poverty ; still retaining in their Minds the Infirmities and Humility of his first Years, and keeping the same Apprehensions of him now a Man and a Prophet, which they had of him whilst a Child in the Shop of a Carpenter. But when Jesus in his Sermon had reprov'd their Infidelity, at which he wonder'd and therefore did but few Miracles there in respect of what he had done at *Capernaum*, and had intimated the Preference that *Capernaum* should have before *Nazareth*, they were so incensed at his just Reproaches, that they resolv'd

to destroy him ; in order to which they thrust him out of the City, and led him to the Brow of the Hill on which the City was built, intending his Execution by throwing him down head-long. But his Work for which he was sent, was not yet finished ; and therefore to preserve himself for the Performance of his Father's Will, he miraculously sav'd himself by making his Escape thro' the midst of them, who had not Power, tho' Malice enough, to seize him.

Jesus having miraculously escap'd the Fury of his own Countrymen, withdraws from ungrateful *Nazareth*, and travels into *Galilee*, teaching in most of the Towns and Villages thereof, attended by his Disciples, and certain Women, out of whom he had cast unclean Spirits, such as were *Mary Magdalen*, *Johanna* Wife to *Cbuzza*, *Hered's* Steward, *Susanna*, and some others, who did for him Offices of Provision, and minister'd to him out of their own Substance, and became Part of that Holy College, which about this time began to be full ; because now the Apostles, whom our Saviour had sent out by two and two, were return'd from their Preaching, full of Joy that the Devils were made subject to the Words of their Mouth, that they had submitted to the Empire of their Prayers, and could no longer stand at the Invocation of the holy Name of Jesus. Having thus wrought Miracles, and taught the People where-ever they came, they began to be a little puffed up with their successful Peregrination, which their holy Master perceiving, assuages the rising Tumour of their Minds ; and to suppress the vain Conceits to which these miraculous Actions of theirs had given Birth, he intimates to them that such Privileges were not the solid Foundations of a holy Joy, any farther than they co-operated toward the great End of God's Glory, and their own Salvation ; to which when they are consigned, and their Names register'd in Heaven, then their Joy is reasonable, holy, true, and perpetual.

It was now about a Year since (o) *Herod* had committed *St. John Baptist* close Prisoner to the Castle of *Macheruns*, lying all the while expos'd to the Fury and Resentment of a malicious Woman, who could not forgive the Rebuke the Baptist gave to *Herod*, in telling him it was unlawful for him to have his Brother's Wife. In vain had *Herodias* rack'd her Brain for an Opportunity to destroy him for it, for *Herod* had not yet fill'd up the Measure of his Iniquity. But, after a Year's waiting, a favourable Occasion offer'd itself to complete her Revenge. *Herod's* Birth-Day being solemniz'd with much Mirth and Gaiety; among other joyful Entertainments nothing contributed so much to *Herod's* Pleasure and Satisfaction as the active Performance of *Herodias's* Daughter in a Dance: Insomuch that *Herod* rashly promises her whatever she would ask, confirming his Promise with an Oath. The Damsel, not wicked enough of herself, consults her impious Mother, who as readily as maliciously instructs her Daughter to demand the Head of *John Baptist*: To obtain which she addresses herself to *Herod*, and demands the Performance of his Promise. *Herod* is now (p) troubled indeed; Variety of Thoughts distract him; not so

(o) *Herod*. Our Translation and that of *Geneva* seem to represent *Herod* as a Prince who respected *St. John Baptist*, and had a great Esteem for all he said, *Mark* 6. 20. Tho' by *St. Matthew* and *St. John*, he is represented as a very wicked Wretch, whom nothing but the Fear of the People, that look'd on *John* as a Prophet, did prevent putting him to Death, *Mat.* 14. 5. *Luke* 3. 19, 20. But we are to consider, that the Greek Word *Synetarei*, which the *Geneva* Version translates to reverence, and ours to observe, signifies to keep Prisoner, or to observe or watch with an ill Design. We must consider farther, that *Robert Stephens* and *Beza* had some Greek Copies, where, instead of the Words which we render *He did many Things*, there are Words which signify *He was much vexed or troubled*: Which indeed much better represent the Temper of that dissolute Prince. *Josephus* the Historian

observes, That *Herod* had put *John Baptist* to Death, because he thought the People were altogether led by him; which is an Argument that he did neither respect him, nor hear him gladly, nor do many Things for love of him. The Text then should be thus translated, *For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just Man, and holy, and he kept him Prisoner, or kept a watchful Eye over him, and having heard him he was much perplexed, tho' he heard him peaceably.*

(p) *Troubled*. The Antients were wont on their Birth-Day-Fests to forbear all secular Employments, to have no Quarrels nor Contentions, no Pleadings in their Courts, but especially no shedding of Blood, no Executions; counting it unfit to deprive any of Life on the Day they received theirs. This therefore might be one of the Occasions of *Herod's* Sorrow or Trouble for this Demand of the Girl.

much

much the Fear of doing an ill thing in murdering the good Man, but Fear of the People's Resentment, who had a mighty Opinion of *John's* Mission. However, because he had sworn, and that it might not appear a Levity or Inconstancy to those that were at the Feast with him, he would not retract his Promise, but sacrifices the Baptist to a rash vow, made in the Gaiety of his Lust and riotous Entertainment. *John* being beheaded, his (q) Head was brought in a Dish, and made a Festival Present to the young (r) Girl, who gave it to her Mother. *John's* Disciples hearing of this, took care of his (s) Burial, which being done they came to Jesus, whose Forerunner *John* was, and told him what had befallen *John*, staying (probably) with Jesus as his Disciples.

The miraculous Cures the Apostles wrought were soon spread round the Country; but when those of our Saviour came to be once divulg'd, the Fame of them echo'd thro' the Palaces of Princes, insomuch that cruel *Herod* in all his Greatness is alarm'd with anxious Thoughts as soon as ever he heard the mighty Character of Jesus, and the Wonders he performed. His Lethargick Soul is soon awaken'd from its sinful Security, and his jealous Apprehensions were such as derived from his Guilt: He thought it was *John the Baptist* who was risen from the Dead, and that these mighty Works were Demonstrations of his Power increased by the Super-additions of Immortality,

(q) *Head*. When *Herodias* had the Head presented her by her Daughter *Salome*, she thrust the Tongue thro' with a Needle, and afterwards buried the Head in her own Palace, thinking to secure it against a Reunion, lest it should again disturb her unlawful Lusts, and disquiet *Herod's* Conscience.

(r) *Girl*. This Girl, who danc'd off the Baptist's Head, passing over a frozen Lake, the Ice breaking she fell in up to the Neck, and her Head was parted from her Body by the Violence of the Fragments of Ice shaken by the Water, and its own Fall. Nor was it long be-

fore God's Judgment reach'd the incestuous Couple: For *Aretas*, a King in *Arabia Petrea* (whose Daughter *Herod* had divorced, or put away for *Herodias*) making war with *Herod* for the Affront to his Daughter, defeats him: Soon after which the adulterous Pair were banish'd to *Lyons* in *France*, by Decree of the *Roman* Senate, where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably.

(s) *Burial*. *John* was buried in *Sebaste*, in the Confines of *Samaria*, having his Grave between the Bodies of *Elizeus* and *Abdias* the Prophets.

and

and more divine Influences, made proportionable to the Honour of a Martyr, and State of Separation.

When Jesus heard of the barbarous Treatment of *John*, that the same might not befall him before he had fulfilled the Office for which he was sent, he departed by Ship from thence, taking none but his Disciples with him, and went to a Place not inhabited. But he could not be long concealed any where; for the People hearing where he was, tho' in an inhospitable Desert, flock to him as fast as they could, taking a great Circuit by Land before they could come at him. The Holy Jesus seeing their Faith and Zeal, tho' he came to this Desert to avoid being throng'd, would not conceal himself any longer from them; but being moved with Compassion he came to them, and healed their Sick. But considering afterwards that they were not within reach of any Entertainment, there being no House or Village near, lest the Multitude should faint in their Return to their Houses, he resolves by a miraculous Supply to make Provision for them: And demanding what Store of Food they had, the Disciples told him only five Loaves and two Fishes. Upon which he commands the Company to sit down on the Grass: He took the Loaves and Fishes, and looking up to Heaven blessed and brake them, giving them to the Disciples to divide among the Multitude. Here was a Miracle beyond the Expectation or Desire of the People: They had their End in attending him, by having their Sick healed; but when they saw that with five Loaves of Barley and two small Fishes he satisfied five thousand Men, besides Women and Children, and that the Fragments which remain'd fill'd twelve Baskets, the Miracle so happily met their Affections, that they no longer doubted of his being the *Messias*, who was to come into the World, and therefore they design'd to take him back with them by Force, and proclaim him (†) King. But Jesus presently sent his Disciples before him to the Wilderness by Sea,

(†) King. See *John* 6. 15.

which was on the same side with *Bethsaida* and *Caper-naum* : For he that left his Father's Kingdom to take upon him the Miseries and Infelicities of this World, declined the tumultuary Election of an Earthly Crown. Therefore, when he had sent away his Disciples to *Bethsaida* by Water, he went into the Mountains to hide himself till the Multitude should separate to their several Habitations, he in the mean time taking the Opportunity of that Retirement for the Advantage of his (v) Prayers. But when the Apostles were engaged in the Sea far from Land, on a sudden a great and violent Storm arose, with which they were pressed to the Extremity of Danger, labouring almost in Hopelessness and Despair till the fourth Watch of the Night, when in the midst of their Fears and Labours Jesus comes walking on the Sea, and appeared to them, which put them into a great Fright. They had lost their Pilot who used to conduct them safely thro' all Difficulties of Sea and Land ; and being now left to themselves, they had nothing but Fear and Despair before their Eyes ; and seeing a Shape of they knew not what walking on the Water, they supposed it had been a Spirit : But in tenderness to their Frailty he soon dispell'd their Fears, by telling them who he was, which yet they desired to have confirmed to them by Demonstrations : For when Jesus bid them not to be afraid, telling them who he was, *Simon Peter* said unto him, *Master, if it be thou, command me to come to thee on the Waters.* The Lord did so ; and *Peter* throwing himself upon the Confidence of his Master's Power and Providence, came out of the Ship ; but his Fear began to weigh him down, and he cried, saying, *Lord save me.* Jesus taking him by the Hand, reprov'd his Timorousness, and the Weakness of his Faith, *Why didst thou doubt ? Why was thy Heart divided between Faith and Diffidence ? Why didst thou distrust my Power, who bidst thee come to me ?* When they were come into the Ship, the rest of the Disciples seeing

(v) See *Mat.* 14. 33.

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XIV.¹⁸

CHRIST walketh on the water.



ST MATTHEW₁₄.Verse 31.⁹²

And Peter beginning to sink, saying, Lord save me.. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him etc).

Peter safe, and the Storm appeased, came and adored Jesus, acknowledging his Omnipotence, and admiring the Divinity of his Power and Person. From hence they go over to the Land of *Genesareth*, whither, when the Inhabitants heard that he was come (for they knew him, as having been there before) they sent unto him all the diseased People in the Place, with so firm a Confidence believing his Power, that they only desired a Touch of his Garment for the curing their most stubborn inveterate Maladies: And as many as did touch his Clothes were healed.

The Day following the People that stood on the other side of the Sea considering that there was no other Boat there, but that wherein the Disciples had embark'd, and that they had put off without Jesus, coming nigh the Place where they had eaten Bread, when by blessing the five Loaves he so multiplied them, that they were sufficient to feed five thousand; when they saw Jesus was gone from thence as well as his Disciples, they concluded that Jesus, tho' he went not with them, was gone after them to *Capernaum*, his usual Habitation: And having Opportunity of other Vessels for Passage, they took Ship, and went to *Capernaum* to look for him. Where when they found him, and not knowing which way he came thither, they in a Surprise asked him how he came there. But Jesus, instead of gratifying their Curiosity with a direct Answer, takes Occasion from this busy Inquiry of theirs to observe to them, “ That which induces you to
“ follow me is not the Acknowledgment of my divine
“ Power evinc'd by my Miracles; nor is it to en-
“ brace my Doctrine, or a Desire to learn of me,
“ but a gross carnal Complacency of gratifying your
“ Appetites, and such Advantages, which you obtain-
“ ed by my multiplying the Loaves to feed you. Set
“ not your Hearts on these poor external Advantages,
“ desire not to acquire this corporal Food in order to
“ your worldly Ends; but look out to get your Part
“ of that Food which is unperishable, and will make
“ all

“ all that feed on it immortal.” Hereupon they say to him, “ What Course wilt thou prescribe to us, that we may be always employed in the Works of God, so as to be acceptable to him?” Jesus tells them, “ That which God requires of them is to believe on him, the *Messias*, whom God hath sent.” Then they, tho’ they had before believed, and resolv’d that he must be the (*w*) *Messias*, and were therefore minded to make him their King, now retract their former Resolutions, and demand farther Demonstrations ; telling him they had great Reason to adhere to *Moses*, who wrought such Miracles, brought down Bread from Heaven ready prepared ; and unless he would produce some such Testimony as might equal that of the *Manna*, they would not believe on him. Jesus saith, “ I assure you that *Manna* came not from Heaven, but out of the airy Region ; that it was the Work of God, not of *Moses* : And now the same God gives you far more durable Food than that was ; gives you Me, who came really from Heaven, and am Bread and Food to your Souls, as *Manna* was to your Bodies : For that fed but your Bodies, and presently putrified ; but that which God gives you now is for your Souls, and feeds them to Eternity. I am that durable vivifick Bread of God, whose Excellency is infinitely above that of *Manna*. You have seen me, and tasted of my Miracles, yet ye do not believe in me, and consequently feed not on this true Bread which came from Heaven. (*x*) This is an Evidence of great Obstinacy in you ; for had God’s preventing Grace had any Success on you, you would certainly come in and obey my Call, and I should not afterwards reject you : For this lies upon me, as the Office for which my Father hath sent me, the fulfilling of which is my Care, that I should preserve every one that with an honest Heart shall thus come and believe in me, and give every one that perseveres, besides many excellent Privileges

(*w*) *Messias*. See *John* 6, 14. &c. (*x*) See *John* 6, 37, &c.

“ here,

“ here, eternal Life of Body and Soul hereafter.
 “ There is also another Part of my Father’s Com-
 “ mission to me, that whosoever believeth in his Son
 “ should not perish, but inherit everlasting Life in
 “ the other World.” When the *Jews* heard him say
 he was the Bread which came down from Heaven,
 they regarding his Birth here on Earth, and his Pa-
 rentage, could not forbear murmuring. To which Je-
 sus replies, “ I have said nothing to cause this murmur-
 “ ing : (y) ’Tis true, there is some Pretence for these
 “ vulgar Prejudices against me ; but it is an Effect of
 “ my Father’s preventing Grace to fit and prepare
 “ Mens Hearts to be ready and willing to come to
 “ me : And for every one that doth thus come, and
 “ therein obey my Call, on him will I certainly bestow
 “ everlasting Life. The Sum therefore of what I thus
 “ say hath been obscurely deliver’d to you of old by
 “ the Prophets : For (z) they speaking of these Times
 “ foretold that God would dispose the Hearts of Men
 “ to receive Christ ; and therefore it was that I said,
 “ That every Disciple of my Father that had not re-
 “ sisted that Guidance, doth certainly come to me,
 “ and believe in me. The *Manna* given in the De-
 “ sert did not make immortal those that did eat it :
 “ But the Bread which is now sent you down from
 “ Heaven, will give Immortality to them that feed on
 “ it. And this Bread of Life is not only prepared for
 “ you *Jews*, but for all besides, that will receive and
 “ digest it into the Food and Nourishment of their
 “ Souls.” Hereupon the *Jews* taking every Thing he
 spake in (a) a literal Sense, disputing among themselves
 how he could give his Flesh to eat, and his Blood to
 drink. Jesus knowing their Diffidence, tells them in
 the same metaphorical Way, “ Except you feed on
 “ this celestial Food, that is, be sincerely my Disci-
 “ ples, you have no part of the true immortal Life in
 “ you. For that I am sent in the Flesh to die for the

(y) See *John* 6. 44, &c.(a) See *John* 6. 56, 57, &c.(z) See *Isa.* 54. 13.

“ World, am such Food as will feed you to everlasting
 “ Life : I that came down from the Father must needs
 “ derive Life from him ; so he that believeth in me
 “ must necessarily derive Life from me. The *Manna*
 “ which your Fathers did eat could not preserve them
 “ for ever, for they are dead ; but the Bread that I
 “ shall give you shall be to you everlasting Nutriment.”

In this metaphorical way of talking Jesus continued some time ; upon which divers of his Disciples (*b*) forsook him, being scandalized by their literal and carnal understanding of those Words which he intended in a spiritual Sense : For the Words which he spake were not profitable in the Sense of Flesh and Blood ; but they are Spirit, and they are Life, himself being the Expounder, who best knew his own Meaning.

Jesus seeing this great Desertion of his Disciples, began to suspect the rest, not excepting the Twelve Apostles ; and therefore turning to them, he asked them, If they also would forsake him ? To whom *Simon Peter* answered, *Lord, whither shall we go ? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life : And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God.* But altho’ this publick Confession was made by *St. Peter* in the Name and Confidence of the other Apostles, yet Jesus, who knew the Hearts of them all, answer’d *Peter*, “ Have
 “ not I of all the Followers that have believed in me,
 “ chosen but twelve to be my constant Attendants,
 “ and one proves a Traitor ?” meaning *Judas Iscariot*, who afterwards betrayed him. This he spake to them prophetically, that they might perceive that the sad Accidents which afterward happen’d, particularly in the Treachery of *Judas*, who conspired with the *Jews* to destroy him, did not surprize or so disadvantageously invade him that he could not prevent them, but that they came by his own Knowledge and Providence : And tho’ *Judas* as yet had made no

(*b*) *John* 6. 66. Among those Disciples which *St. John* says deserted our Saviour upon the misunderstanding of this Sermon, *St. Mark* the Evangelist

is by *Epiphanius*, *Hæres.* 15. said to be one, but was afterwards recalled by *Simon Peter*.

Parents, thinking it to be Religion, tho' they neglected Piety and Charity, and that to so great Objects as necessitous Parents. Here was an Example plain enough to demonstrate, that they who insisted so strictly upon the Observation of Traditions, made no Scruple to null the Obligations of God's Commands. Then charging them with downright Hypocrisy, he reproaches them with what *Isaiab* prophesied of them; "Ye
 " draw near me in outward Professions of Devotion,
 " but your Hearts are far from me. The Service
 " which ye perform to me is vain, and likely to receive
 " a slender Reward, since my Commands are not re-
 " garded by you, but instead thereof ye set up the
 " Constitutions of Men." And leaving the Pharisees with some Displeasure, he calls the Multitude, who, while he talks with the Pharisees, stood at some Distance, and speaks more hopefully of, and chearfully to them, saying, "As to this Matter of washing before
 " Meat, so much insisted on by the Pharisees, do you
 " consider what I now say, *Not that which is eaten, but*
 " *that which is spoken polluteth any Man.*" But his Disciples knowing the Malice of the Pharisees, and fearing that by any farther Reproaches he might aggravate and provoke them to do him some Mischief, he gives them no other Reply than this: "All that come with
 " such Prejudice as the Pharisees do, that prefer their
 " own Ordinances before the Commands of God, it's
 " to be expected, that telling them the Truth will not
 " please them. All Seed, but that of which my Fa-
 " ther owns the sowing, and which is radicated in

tho' contrary to Charity, yet very frequent among them, to bind a Man's self by Vow or Execration, that he will in nothing be beneficial to his Neighbour, his Parent, &c. confirming by Oath the Cruelty of his Disposition, says *Philo.* And this by them was called *Corban*, *Mark 7. 11.* and *Mat. 15. 5.* a Gift. What is thus passed under their Vow, is, say they, utterly forbidden or unlawful, which being consecrated must not be touched, or employed to any other Use.

So that the plain Meaning of the Place is, A Father being in want complains to his Son; the Son answers that he hath vowed he will not, and therefore it is unlawful for him to relieve his Father: And the Pharisees approved of this Practice, that he may thus evacuate his Duty to his Parents; and tho' quite contrary to the Precept of honouring and relieving them, yet it was thought obligatory by them to the frustrating this Commandment.

“ Humility

“ Humility and Piety, shall come to nothing ; and
“ consequently so must all Faith in these opinionative
“ Men ; and therefore it is not strange if they be gal-
“ led at my Words, and depart from them upon my
“ reproving their Errors. If this hath touch’d and
“ discourag’d them, let them go ; they are stupidly
“ and perversly ignorant themselves ; they take plea-
“ sure in being called Doctors and Instructors of the
“ Ignorant : And what can be the Effect of this, but
“ that the Leaders, and they that are led by them,
“ shall together ingulph themselves in Destruction ?”

After this he thunders out Woes and Sadnesses against their Impieties, for being curious of Times, and punctual in Rites and Ceremonies, but at the same time most negligent and incurious of Judgment, and the Love of God ; upbraids them for their Pride and Hypocrisy, for imposing heavy Burdens upon others which themselves helped not to support ; for taking away the Key of Knowledge from the People, obstructing the Passage to Heaven, and approving the Acts of their Fathers in persecuting the Prophets. But for the Question of Washings, at the Importunity of *Peter* he explains it to them, shewing that no outward Impurity did stain the Soul in the sight of God ; every Thing that we eat first comes from without, and so is no Part of us, is not imputable to us in respect of the Principle, and then doth but pass thro’ us, is soon digested and thrown out of the Body again, and so be it never so gross, never so unclean, it cannot pollute the Eater : But all Pollution is from within, from the Corruption of the Heart, such as impure Thoughts, unchaste Desires, unholy Purposes, immodest and indecent Speech ; these are the Things that leave a lasting Stain upon the Soul, and defile it ; but so merely corporeal and external a Thing as omitting to wash before Meat, cannot be supposed to defile a Man.

From hence Jesus departed into the Coasts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and entred into an House with design to conceal himself. But the Fame of his Miracles disco-

ver'd him wheresoever he went ; especially in case of Distress. The Diligence of a Mother's Love and Sorrow for her Child in Torment soon found him out in his Retirement ; for a *Syrophœnician* Woman hearing of his miraculous Power which he exercis'd over Devils and unclean Spirits, recognizing his Dignity, thus addresses herself to him, *Have Mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my Daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil.* Jesus at first receiv'd her with Coldness and Indifference, but his Disciples, to be rid of her Importunity, desired him to grant her Request and dismiss her. Jesus tells them he was sent only to the *Jews*, to reduce them to Repentance, and to shew his Miracles among them. The poor Woman impatient of Delay, continues her importunate Addresses to him, and prostrating herself at his Feet, implores his Help on her Child. Jesus told her, *It was not (e) meet to work those Miracles on an Heathen, which were destin'd to God's People the Jews.* The afflicted Mother finding his Discourse to tend to nothing but Discomfort, and Rejection of her for her Nation's sake, renews her Petition, humbly acknowledging the Truth of what he urged, but in all Submission hoped a poor distressed Heathen might be admitted to partake of the Mercies promised to the *Jews*. She desired but one Instance of Favour on her Daughter, which he poured forth without measure upon the Sons and Daughters of *Israel*. Jesus being pleased with her Zeal and Discretion, and pitying her Daughter's Infelicity, dismisses her with this Applause of her Faith, and Comfort to her Child, *O Woman, great is thy Faith, be it unto thee as thou desirest.* And her Daughter was made whole in that instant of Time. The joyful Mother retires with infinite Pleasure and Satisfaction, and finds her Daughter perfectly cured. Jesus after the Performance of this Miracle staid not long there, but returning to the Coast of *Galilee* thro' the midst of *Decapolis*, they present unto him an unhappy Youth, deprived of the Benefit of Speech and Hearing. Our Savi-

(e) *Meet*, Compare this Explication with the Text of St. *Mat.* 15, 26, 27.

ST MARK CHAP. VII.

19

JESUS healeth the dumb man.



ST MARK 7. Verse 33. ^{101.}

And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit and touched his tongue,

our surveying this Object with Pity, takes him (*f*) aside from the gazing Croud, and, in a more than usually solemn Posture of Devotion, fixing his Eyes on Heaven, where the Father of Light dwelleth, pronounced the young Man cured. The String which so long had held his Tongue in Person was broken, and the Organs of his Ears were sensible of the Repercussion of each joyful Sound upon them. Our Saviour returning him to his glad Friends, enjoins them Silence; who cannot contain their Joy, but joining with both *Jews* and *Gentiles* in Admiration of such wonderful Acts, acknowledge that none but the God of *Israel* could do such Things.

These miraculous Acts of his echo thro' all Places wherever he passes, attracting Multitudes of diseased People, who apply to him for Relief; which none fail of, for he healed them all. The People could not forbear following him; each Day and Hour furnishing them with something rare and strange, insomuch that they followed him three Days successively, and at last had nothing of Sustenance to support them till they could return to their own Homes. Jesus seeing such Crouds of People lie fainting about him, in pity to their Necessity resolved to feed them once more at the Expence of a Miracle. In order thereunto he first tries the Apostles Faith, by commanding them to provide for his poor hungry Guests. They answer in a Surprise, "Whence should we find Provision for such a Multitude in so barren and inhospitable a Place?" However he demands an Account of their scanty Store, which they producing, amounted to no more than se-

(*f*) *Aside*. The Fathers differ very much in their Opinions about the Reason of Christ's taking the young Man aside; for since he design'd to work a Miracle on him, it might be thought expedient to do it in publick. But after various Conjectures, the Context in *St. Mark* 7. 36. seems most clearly to explain this Text in the 33d Verse, of *taking him aside*. For in ver. 36. our Saviour commands that this Miracle

be kept secret; for which Reason he may be supposed to do it in secret. As to the Performance of this and many other Miracles in secret, the general Opinion is, that our Saviour in the main did it to denote his Humility; that he perform'd not many Miracles in publick for Ostentation sake, but for the Necessity of convincing the *Jews* as well as healing their Infirmities.

ven Loaves and a few small Fishes. With this poor Pittance of Food he begins the Banquet, ordering the Multitude to seat themselves on the grassy Carpets, while he multiply'd this small Storehouse of Bread and Fish to a Quantity large enough to supply their Wants. Then taking the Loaves into his sacred Hands, he blessed them, and giving to his Disciples, bade them distribute to the People of them and the Fish, which they do, whilst the astonish'd Croud know not which most to admire, the gratifying their hungry Appetites, or their astonish'd Senses. But the blessed Jesus's whole Life is a continued Series of Wonders, each miraculous Hour being succeeded by another: For no sooner had he fed and satisfied this Multitude, that consisted of above four thousand, but the seven Loaves and small Fishes, which one small Basket could contain, do at the End of a Feast, when all the Guests were satisfied, produce seven Baskets full of Fragments.

From hence Jesus departed by Ship to the Coasts of *Mageddon* and *Dalmanutha*, whither the Pharisees and Sadducees came seeking a Sign of him. But Jesus rejected their captious and impertinent Demand, knowing they did it to an ill Purpose, and with Disaffection; reproving them that they discerned the Face of the Sky, and the Prognosticks of fair or foul Weather, but not the Signs of the Time of the Son of Man. However, since they had neglected so great Demonstrations of Miracles, gracious Discourses, holy Laws and Prophecies, they must expect no other Sign but the Sign of the Prophet (g) *Jonas*. And so he dismisses these impertinent Inquisitors.

Jesus again taking Ship, passes over the Lake, and by the way, as his Disciples were solicitous because they had forgot to take Bread, he gave them caution to beware of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the Leaven of *Herod*; meaning the Hypocrisy and Vanities of the one, and the Heresy of the other. For *Herod's* Leaven

(g) *Jonas*. Meaning the Resurrection of his Body after three Days Burial: For as *Jonas* was three Days and

three Nights in the Whale's Belly, so must the Son of Man be in the Bowels of the Earth.

was

ST MARK CHAP. VIII. 21
CHRIST feedeth the multitude miraculously.



ST MARK 8. Verse 8. 102.

*So they did eat, and were filled, and
they took up of the broken meat that was
left, seven baskets*

was the Pretence that he was the *Messias*, which the Sect of the *Herodians* did earnestly and spitefully promote. But the Disciples understanding their Lord in a literal Sense about taking care of bringing Bread with them, he reproaches them with Ingratitude and Forgetfulness, in their Distrust of God's Providence, and his Care of them. "Why should you think, says he, that my Speech should relate to your Neglect of bringing Bread with you? as if I were not able to supply that Want. Will you never understand nor consider what has been before your Eyes? Do you not remember the two miraculous Feasts? the one of feeding five thousand with five Loaves, the other of four thousand with seven Loaves? How stupidly inconsiderate are ye to forget these Things?" After this manner entertaining themselves by the Way, they came together to *Bethsaida*, where Jesus cured a blind Man; for spitting on his Eyes and putting his Hands upon him, it was to the poor dark Wretch a salutary Balsam, when his divine Benediction had once consecrated it.

Our Blessed Lord soon departs thence into the Coasts of *Cæsarea Philippi*, out of *Herod's* Power, (for it was in *Philip's* Jurisdiction) and after he had prayed with his Disciples, he inquired what Opinion the World had of him; and (*b*) whom they thought him to be. They tell him, some say thou art *John the Baptist*, some *Elias*, and others *Jeremias*, or one of the Prophets. But Jesus asked the Apostles their Opinion; and *Peter* in the Name of all the rest made an open and confident Confession, "*Thou art CHRIST, The Son of the living God.*" This Confession Jesus not only confirmed as true, but as revealed by God; "This Faith of thine, saith Jesus to *Peter*, is not built

(*b*) *Whom.* In *Galilee* especially the Sect of the Pharisees was mightily divided, whose Opinion was, That the Souls of dead Men according to their several Merits did transmigrate into other Bodies of very perfect and excellent Persons, And therefore in all this Variety none hit upon the right, or fancied him to be a distinct Person from the Antients: But altho' they differed in the Affignation of his Name, yet generally they agreed it was the Soul of a departed Prophet, which had passed into another Body.

“ upon human Testimony, but upon the Miracles
 “ and Doctrines which thou hast seen and heard,
 “ which are the Testimonies of God himself, where-
 “ by he hath revealed me to thee.” And immedi-
 ately after the Blessing of *Peter*’s Person, upon Allusion
 of *Peter*’s Name, which signifies a Stone, Jesus said,
Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock (the Article of *Pe-*
ter’s Confession) *I will build my Church*; promising As-
 sistances even to perpetuity, insomuch that the Gates
 of Hell, that is, Persecution, Death, and the Grave,
 should never prevail against it; adding withal, a Pro-
 mise to *Peter*, in behalf of all the rest, as he made
 Confession for and in the Name of them (*i*) all, that
 he would give to him the (*k*) Keys of the Kingdom
 of Heaven, so that whatsoever he should bind on Earth
 should be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever he should
 loose on Earth should be loosed in Heaven. This
 was a Power which he never communicated before or
 since, but to them and their Successors; greater than
 the large Charter of Nature, and the Donative of the
 Crèation, in which all the Creatures under Heaven
 were made subject to Man’s Empire; but till now
 Heaven was never subordinate to human Minистра-
 tion.

The Disciples thus knowing and acknowledging him
 to be the *Messias*, and himself having confirm’d it so
 to them, he commands them not to publish it till af-
 ter his ‘Resurrection, at which Time in his Wisdom
 he thought it most seasonable. And now the Days

(*i*) *All*. When our Blessed Lord put
 the Question to his Disciples, *Mat.* 15.
 21. concerning himself, who he was, he
 did not apply himself in particular to
Peter, for he there says, *But whom say ye*
that I am? Upon which *Peter*, as the
 eldest Apostle, answers in the Name of
 the rest, *Thou art Christ, &c.* and con-
 sequently the Reply of our Saviour, and
 the Blessing subsequent thereupon, was
 not only applicable or pronounced sing-
 ly to *Peter*, but to the rest of the Twelve;
 and the Power of Binding and Loosing
 was not only given by him to *Peter*, as

the *Romanists* fondly presume, but also
 to all the rest. This is plain from *Mat.*
 18. 18. where our Saviour in general
 says, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth,*
shall be bound in Heaven, &c. Not
 whatsoever thou shalt bind, &c.

(*k*) *Keys*. This is the Power of ex-
 ercising Censures and ecclesiastick Dis-
 cipline, and by them to exclude Men
 in case of their Impenitence, either by
 laying Restraints on them in the
 Church, or to turn them out of the
 Pale of it, and upon Repentance to
 admit them again.

from

from hence forward to the Death of Jesus, we must reckon to be like Vigils or Eves of his Passion: For now he began and often did repeat those sad Predictions of the barbarous Usage he should shortly find from the *Jewish Sanhedrim*; that he should be rejected of the Elders and chief Priests and Scribes, and suffer many Things at *Jerusalem*, and be killed and raised up the third Day. *Peter* hearing this sad Discourse so contrary to his Hopes, which built too much upon temporal Expectances, (for he had hitherto only learnt the Doctrine of Christ's Coming, but not the Mystery of the Cross) in great but mistaken Zeal, took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not befall thee.* But Jesus not approving so soft and human an Admonition, that favoured not of God, but the World, chid *Peter* severely; saying, "*Get thee behind me (1) Satan, thou art an Offence to me; a Snare moving me to that which were a Sin, if I should yield to it, and contrary to the Will and Command of God my Father.*" And calling his Disciples to him, he told them a second Part of a sad Doctrine, which not only himself but they also must suffer. For when he the Head was to be crown'd with Thorns, it would be a great Indecency for them the Members to be indulg'd in Softness. And therefore to prepare them for what would hereafter happen to him and them, he tells them, that whoever will be his Disciple, must take up his Cross, deny himself and all his fonder Appetites, and trace his Master's Footsteps, mark'd out with his Blood that he shed for their Redemption. And to let them farther see that there was no escaping from the Participation of Christ's Sufferings, he adds this Dilemma, *He that will save his Life shall lose it, and he that will lose it shall save it to Eternity.* Which

(1) *Satan.* The Word *Satan* here signifies according to the use of the Hebrew Phrase, 2 Sam. 19. 22. where *David* rejecting the Counsel of *Abishai*, saith, *Why art thou to me this Day,* in *Satanam*, for an Adversary? That is, *Why dost thou give me this evil pernicious Counsel, and so suppliest the real Enemy's, or even the Devil's Place to me?*

Part soever we choose there is a Life to be lost : But as the first are foolish to the extremest Misery, that will lose their Souls to gain the World, so they are most wise and fortunate, that will give their Lives for him, because, when the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and his Father's, and of his Angels, he shall reward every Man according to his Works. This Discourse Jesus concluded with a Prophecy, that (*m*) some standing in that Presence should not die till they saw the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.

But that they might not entertain the Thoughts of a mere national Kingdom only, and such as their natural Conceptions could suggest to them ; the Holy Jesus about eight Days after this Conference with his Disciples selects Three of them, on whom he had bestowed many singular Favours, above the rest of the Twelve, to whom he intended to give a bright and excellent Specimen of the Glories of Heaven : Therefore taking with him *Peter* and *James* and *John*, he went up into *Mount Tabor* to pray ; and while he prayed he was transfigured before them, and his Face did shine like the Sun, and his Garments were white and glistering : And there appeared in this Glory with him *Moses* and *Elias*, talking of the (*n*) Decease which he should accomplish at *Jerusalem* ; which Glory these Apostles, after they had awaked from Sleep, did behold. These two that talked with Jesus having finished their Embassy of Death, (which they delivered in Forms of Glory representing the Excellencies of the Reward) departed, leaving the Apostles full of Fear and Wonder ; insomuch that *Peter* talked he

(*m*) *Some*. This was meant of St. *John*, that he should not die, till that remarkable Coming of Christ in Judgment upon his Crucifiers, the visible Destruction of the *Jewish* State. And that we find was fulfilled in St. *John's* seeing the Destruction of the *Jews*, which was to fall in that Generation, *Mat. 24.* that is, in the Life-time of some there present, and is called the *Kingdom of God*, and *Coming of Christ*,

and by consequence here most probably the *Son of Man's Coming in his Kingdom*, that is, his Coming in the Exercise of his kingly Office, to work Vengeance on his Enemies, and discriminate the faithful Believers from them. Which was as literally fulfilled as it had been foretold.

(*n*) *Decease*. See St. *Luke 9. 31*, &c. who is more large on this Passage than all the other Evangelists.

knew

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XVII.²²
The Lunatick healed.



ST MATTHEW 17. Verse 18.¹⁰⁷
*And JESUS rebuked the devil. and
 he departed out of him. and he was
 cured from that very hour.*

knew not what, tho' nothing amiss, when he desired Jesus to give them leave to build (o) three Tabernacles there, that they might not any more comfort themselves with those beneath them.

After the Departure of these Attendants, a Cloud incircled Jesus and the Disciples, and a Voice came out of the Cloud and said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd, hear him.* When Peter, James and John, heard the Voice from Heaven, which undoubtedly was a most glorious Voice, they were struck with Fear and Astonishment, and fell down prostrate. But the Cloud quickly disappearing, freed the Disciples from the Fear it had put them in. So they waited on their Lord down the Hill, who, as he went along, commanded them Silence; which they observed till the Resurrection.

The Day after, a Lunatick, that was sore troubled with a Devil who sought to destroy him with Fire and Water, was by his Father brought to Jesus, intreating him to heal his Son. He had in vain addressed himself to the Disciples, that staid behind him, when he retir'd to the *Mount*, but by reason of their want of Faith they could effect no Cure. Upon this Jesus rebuk'd those Disciples, accused them of Infidelity and Perverseness, that he having been so long with them, having given them Power to heal Diseases and cast out Devils, and in some Cases prescribed (p) Prayer and Fasting as the Means of doing it, they now should neglect those Means, and consequently not be able to cast out this Devil: This Impotency therefore was their Fault, and as such is here charged upon them; and having done chiding them, he calls for the Lunatick to be brought to him: And when he came, Jesus commanded the evil Spirit, that brought the Disease on him, to be gone; and the Devil and the Disease departed from him together.

(o) *Three Tabernacles.* Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 17. says, some devout Persons in memory of the Mystery of the Transfiguration of our blessed Lord,

did erect three Churches in the same Place in After-Ages.

(p) *Prayer.* See *Mat.* 17. 21.

From thence Jesus departed privately into *Galilee*, and in his Journey repeated those melancholick Sadnesses of his approaching Passion; which so (q) afflicted the Spirits of his Disciples, that they dare not put that Question any farther upon him, lest he should take occasion to interweave something of that unpleasant Argument with it.

Whilst Jesus abode in *Galilee*, he kept himself as (r) private as he could, telling his Disciples the Reason of his so doing, because having done so many Miracles among them, which wrought so little Effect upon them, as that he foresaw he should soon be put to Death by them, he thought it not yet seasonable to do any more; till by the Addition of his Resurrection from Death, he should be more likely to be received and believed by them.

Jesus being now at *Capernaum*, the Collectors of the (s) Tribute came to *Peter*, asking him if his Master paid the accustomed Imposition, which was exacted from all the Sons of *Israel*, from twenty Years old and above, to pay for Redemption and Propitiation, and for the Use of the Tabernacle? When *Peter* came into the House where Jesus was, with design to acquaint him with the Officer's Demand, Jesus knowing the Message with which he was big, prevented him, by asking, "Of whom do the Kings of the *Gentiles* take Tribute, of their own Children or of Strangers?" *Peter* answered, of Strangers. "Then, said Jesus, are the Children free." Meaning, that since the *Gentile* Kings do not exact Tribute of their own Household, then this Tribute, which is paid to God for his Temple, did not belong to him, who was his Son, nor them that were his Domesticks, to pay. "Yet, says he, to avoid Offence, and that they shall not say that I contemn the Temple, or despise the Authority that requires it, which would be an

(q) Afflicted. See *Luke* 9. 45. *Mat.* 17. 23.

(r) Private. See *Mat.* 17. 22. *Mark* 9. 30.

(s) Tribute. This was the Tribute which every *Jew* paid yearly to the Temple, to the value of fifteen Pence, *Exod.* 30.

“ Occasion to them to reject and sin against my Doctrine, go and cast a Hook into the Lake, and the first Fish which thou shalt catch, when thou openest its Mouth, thou shalt in it find a Piece of Money, pay that for me and thee.”

Our Saviour having a little before mention'd his (t) Resurrection from Death, his Disciples, supposing his Kingdom to commence from that, fall upon an ambitious and mistaken Dispute, who should have the chief Place of Dignity in that Kingdom of the *Messias*? still imagining it to be an external secular Royalty, and each desiring to be highest in the Favour of their Prince. But Jesus, from whose all-searching Eye the most intimate Thoughts of Man cannot be conceal'd, by an early Admonition checks their growing Pride and aspiring Ambition; and being willing by some Emblem or visible Representation to satisfy this Question of theirs, as far as was useful to them, takes a little Child, and set him in the midst of them, proposing him as a Pattern of Humility and Simplicity; such Infant-Candor and Lowliness of Spirit being the necessary Gate thro' which all must pass that will enter into the Courts of Heaven: And to instruct them the better how to imitate this Pattern of Meekness, he tells them; “ Unless you change your Inclinations and Desires, restrain this vain ambitious Expectation and Pursuit of a carnal Kingdom of Christ, and the Desires of Dignities and Distinctions in it, you can never be true Disciples of Christ.” And from this Instance of Humility in the Hieroglyphick of the Child, he informs them that the State of Christianity is such, as that he who is most lowly is most capable of Eminence in it: And that mean and lowly Persons are so highly valued by him, that he that would be thought to do a grateful Thing to Christ, could find no fitter way to express it than by a kind and tender Treatment of such, especially in cherishing their Souls, and advancing them in the Way of

(t) Resurrection. See *Mat.* 17. 23. *Mark* 9. 31.

Godliness. Whereas on the other side, he that shall persecute, or any way molest and drive away from Christ, and the Practice of Christianity, any such mean and lowly Person, 'twere better for him that shall thus offend, that a Mill-stone were hung about his Neck, and that he were cast into the Sea, where the Weight would inevitably and soon sink him to the Bottom. From this Emblem of the Child, Jesus discoursed of the Care of God over little Children, whether naturally or spiritually such; of the Danger of doing them any Injury or Scandal; the Care and Power of their Guardian Angels: And then warning them before-hand of the Necessity in the Event that Scandals should arise, and of the great Woe and Infelicity of those Persons who were the active Instruments of such Offences, he tells them, that tho' there will be great Apostatizing amongst those that receive the Faith, and that the Doctrine of Christ shall meet with great Discouragement and Opposition; and that tho' God shall think fit to permit Enemies for the Exercise and Trial of Christians, yet this will be no matter of Excuse, but rather of Aggravation of their Sin and Woe, that shall be the Authors and Instruments of this End. To confirm his Disciples therefore against such sad Occasions, he thus cautions them: " If any
 " think that is nearest too thee, whether Friend, Plea-
 " sure or Profit, (as dear to thee as any Member of
 " thy self) shall go about to disturb or discourage
 " thee in thy Christian Course and Profession, be sure
 " to renounce it; for it is more eligible for thee
 " thro' Difficulties and Austerities to gain eternal
 " Bliss, than by escaping them to run into Sin, and so
 " hazard everlasting Fire. The Son of Man came to
 " reduce those that are gone astray from the Ways of
 " God, to shew that ye ought to be diligent and in-
 " dustrious in keeping in the Way of Truth the mean-
 " est Person on Earth, that is in any danger of Ruin
 " to the Soul. For judge, I pray you, pursues he
 " by this ordinary Resemblance: If a Man be posses-
 " sed

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XVIII.²⁰
The wicked servant.



ST MATTHEW 18. Verse 28. ^{III.}

And the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence, and he laid hands on him etc.

“ fed of an hundred Sheep, and one of them happen
 “ to stray from the rest, doth he not set so great a Va-
 “ lue on that one Sheep that is lost, as at the present
 “ to leave the ninety and nine, and to go and search
 “ sollicitously for that one: And upon finding it, is
 “ he not affected with more Joy at the first Sight of it,
 “ than he is at the beholding his whole Flock, which
 “ had never run that hazard? Thus is it with God;
 “ he is unwilling that the meanest Person on Earth
 “ should be lost, that might with any Care or Me-
 “ thod be recover’d: To this purpose these Directions
 “ I now give, I require to be observed in the (v)
 “ Church for ever. If in the Traverses of Life, Dis-
 “ contents and Injuries do arise, let the injured Per-
 “ son demean himself with the greatest Prudence and
 “ Tenderness: First, reprove the offending Party
 “ privately; and if he repent, forgive him for ever,
 “ with a Mercy as unwearied and as multiplied as
 “ his Repentance. For the Servant to whom his Lord
 “ forgave ten thousand Talents, because he refused
 “ to forgive his Fellow-Servant an hundred Pence,
 “ was deliver’d to the Tormentors, till he should
 “ pay that Debt which his Lord once forgave, till
 “ the cruel Servant’s Impiety forced him to repent
 “ his Donative and Remission. But if the Person of-
 “ fending refuses the Charity of private Correction,
 “ let him be reprov’d before a few Witnesses; and if
 “ he still continue incorrigible, let him be brought
 “ to the Tribunal of the Church, against whose Cen-
 “ sures if he shall dare to kick, let him feel her Power,
 “ and be cut off from her Communion of Saints, be-
 “ coming in the Eyes of all Men as an Heathen or a
 “ Publican.” And to preserve the Church in Repu-
 “ tation and Power, that she should not seem to have
 “ a dead and ineffectual Hand in her Animadversions
 “ and Censures, Jesus promises to all his Apostles what
 “ he had before promised them in the Person of St. *Peter*,
 “ a Power of binding and loosing upon Earth; and that

(v) *Church. See Mat. 18. 17.*

it should be ratified in Heaven what they shall so dispose on Earth ; assuring them, that as the Assize of three Men among the *Jews* had some Power, so shall any two or three Christians join'd in such a Reprehension be considerable in this Matter, having the Privilege of God's Presence (as in their Prayers thus united, so in their united Admonitions) to give them Authority, Assistance and Blessing : For where two or three are assembled together for this Piece of Discipline, or any holy Action besides, there, says he, am I present in a special manner, and will not suffer the Actions which they thus undertake by my Appointment to be set at nought by any.

Whilst the Blessed Jesus was giving these Instructions to his Disciples, St. *John* interrupted him, by telling him of a Stranger that cast out Devils in the Name of Jesus ; but, because he was not of the Family, he had forbidden him : of which Jesus in no ways approv'd ; for in all Reason he that saw the Name of Jesus so powerful and triumphant over Devils, should have done Veneration to the Person, as well as invoked the Name, or us'd it as an Instrument of ejecting impure Spirits.

(w) About this Time the Feast of Tabernacles drawing near, the Blessed Jesus was very much importun'd by his Kindred to go to *Judea* to the Feast, that the Multitudes which followed him might again see the Miracles which he did ; for they thought he acquired no Fame by doing his Miracles privately. But these Things were urg'd by them through want of Faith. However, Jesus to set them right, tells them, that it was not yet proper for him to be so publick, because the Doctrine that he taught was odious to the World ; (x) for at that time the *Jews* sought to kill him. He told them, that they might appear where they would, being not under any such (y) Hatred as he was from the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*.
Upon

(w) See *John* 7. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c.
(x) See *ibid.* v. 1.

(y) Hatred. The Text here implied in *John* 7. 7. is translated thus ; *The World*

Upon this Conference his Disciples went up to the Feast, to which Jesus designing to go in private, as he passed thro' *Samaria*, he found the Inhabitants of a little Village so (2) inhospitable, as to refuse him Entertainment; which so provok'd the intemperate Zeal of *James* and *John*, that they fain would have called for Fire to consume them, even as *Elias* did. But Jesus, with a Sweetness of Aspect natural to him, mildly corrects and restrains their revengeful Heat, tells them they were quite mistaken in the Oeconomy and Conduct of the Christian Spirit, which he had prescribed, and which differ'd much from that of a Prophet in the Old Testament, moved by Zeal against the Enemies of God: "The Course
 " (said he) which in such Cases you must take, is that
 " of Meekness and Persuasion, and not rashly and in-
 " discreetly, upon every little Umbrage of Displea-
 " sure, invoke the Vengeance of Heaven to destroy a
 " Man, whose Redemption was to cost the Effusion
 " of his Saviour's Blood. I came not (continues
 " he) to kill any, but to preserve and rescue from
 " Death, and from all that is ill." All the Revenge that Jesus took, was quietly to leave the Place: But to demonstrate more plainly to those Disciples, whose mistaken Conduct he had blamed, how they ought to behave themselves upon such Occasions, by a Miracle he shews them, that they must recompense Evil with Good. And immediately ten leprous Persons,

World cannot hate you, but me it hateth, &c. This Translation is literal indeed; but all or most Interpreters fail not to observe, that this Expression does not always denote an absolute Impossibility to do any Thing but only a Design or Will not to do it, upon the Account of some Difficulty or Uneasiness it may be attended with; and this they prove from several unquestionable Examples. 'Tis said, *Gen. 19. 22. That God could not do any Thing to Sodom till Lot had left it:* And *Gen. 37. 4. That Joseph's Brethren could not speak peaceably unto him:* That the unkind

Friend, *Luke 11. 7. could not rise to lend his Friend three Loaves;* with several others. But it is certain, that God, if he had pleas'd, could have destroy'd *Sodom* independently of *Lot*; that *Joseph's Brethren* could have spoken peaceably to him, &c. Therefore all this impotency implied in the Words *can not*, is to be attributed to the want of Will: And since People are so ready to take these Places literally, it is proper they should be render'd, *They would not*, and not, *They cannot*.

(2) See *Luke 9. 51. and 17. 11.*

who came out of the Neighbourhood where he had been so inhospitably treated, presented themselves with loud and sad Exclamations for Help. “Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us.” His Compassion was as ready to relieve, as their Necessity to ask; for at sight he pronounces the Method of their Cure: “Go shew your selves to the Priest, as the Law requires (which he was always tender of violating) and before you come thither, you shall be healed:” Which accordingly fell out; for as they were on their Way, they were all cured. But see the innate Ingratitude of humane Nature! Of the ten who receiv’d this miraculous Blessing, but one poor Wretch return’d to give Thanks, and he a Stranger; who, before he was cured, by reason of the Uncleaness of his Disease, was forced to stand afar off, joyfully approaches his Divine Physician, with a loud Voice glorifying God, and in humble Prostration throwing himself at his Feet, gives Thanks to the Holy Jesus.

The Blessed Jesus, being now arriv’d at *Jerusalem*, for some Days did not appear in the publick Meetings, tho’ at the same time he heard of the various Opinions of Men concerning him; some saying that he was a good Man, others that he deceiv’d the People; and the Pharisees sought for him to do him a Mischief. But when they despaired of finding him in the midst of the Feast among the People, they repair to the Temple, where they find him preaching openly, to the great Surprize and Amazement of those that knew his Parentage and Education; for they marvelled, saying, “How comes he to understand the Law and Scriptures so well, having not been brought up in the Schools of the Prophets?” But notwithstanding Jesus had convinced them by the Variety and Divinity of his Miracles and Discourses; yet so perverse and obstinate were they, that they gave the greatest Testimony in the World of humane Weakness, and how prevalent a Prejudice is above the Confidence and Conviction of a Demonstration: For a Proverb, a Mistake,

ST LUKE CHAP. XVII. 25
JESUS cleanseth ten lepers.



ST LUKE 17. Verse 12. 114.

And as he entred into a certain vil-
lage, there met him ten men that were
lepers, and stood afar off:

Mistake, a mere Error in matter of Circumstance, did in their Understandings out-weigh Multitudes of Miracles and Arguments of which they had been Witnesses, and which before had convinced them; for *Christ* being of *Galilee*, because of the Proverb, *That out of Galilee comes no Prophet*, and because the Rulers did not believe in him, these out-weighed the Demonstrations of his Mercy, Power, and Divinity. But notwithstanding these Opinions of some, yet very many believed on him, and no Man durst lay Hands on him to take him; for as yet his Time was not come, in which he meant to give himself up to the Power of the *Jews*: And therefore when the Pharisees sent Officers to seize him, they also became his Disciples, being surpriz'd at the Excellency of his Doctrine. And not only the inferior Officers, but the Rulers were suspected; for *Nicodemus*, the same that by Stealth and in the Night came before to Jesus, seeing with what Prejudice the Pharisees persecuted him, could not forbear interposing, urging the Unreasonableness of condemning any Person without hearing. Upon which they reproach him for taking a *Galilean's* Part, *Art thou, one of the Sanhedrin, a Follower of the Galilean?* Examine all Times, you shall never find that *Galilee* hath brought forth a Prophet.

In the Evening Jesus went to the Mount of *Olivet* on the East of *Jerusalem*, and the next Day returned again into the Temple; where the Scribes and Pharisees brought him a Woman taken in the Act of Adultery, tempting him to give Sentence, that they might accuse him of Severity or Intermeddling, if he condemn'd her, or of Remissness and Popularity, if he did acquit her. But Jesus found out an Expedient for their Difficulty, and changed the Scene by bidding the innocent Person among them cast the first Stone at the Adulterers; and then stooping down to give them a fair Occasion to withdraw, he wrote upon the Ground with his Finger, whilst they left the Woman and her Crime to a more private Censure. None remaining now but Jesus and the Woman, she standing before him

him in the Posture of an accused Criminal before a Judge: he lifting up himself, and finding none but the Woman, asked her what was become of her Accusers, or whether any one had condemn'd her? she answer'd, *No Man, Lord. Neither do I*, said he, *but call thee to Repentance and Reformation*: And charging her to sin no more, he dismissed her.

A while after Jesus begins again to discourse to the *Jews* of his (a) Mission from God, telling them that he was the Light of the World, and that whoever would follow him should receive that Illumination which should guide him to eternal Light. The *Jews* refuse to believe him, because of his own single Testimony of himself: To which he replied, “ You that know not my
 “ divine Extraction, judge of me only according to my
 “ human Original, and in proportion to that give your
 “ Opinion of me; but yet if I should do so, my Judgment
 “ would be valid according to Law, because this
 “ is the Judgment and Testimony of my Father, who
 “ by his Spirit and Miracles, and his Voice from Heaven
 “ requiring all to believe on me, must needs judge
 “ them as obstinate Unbelievers, who shall stand out
 “ against all this. It is the known Custom of all Laws,
 “ particularly of yours (*Deut. 17. 6.*) that the Testimony
 “ of two Men is to be received in any Cause whatsoever: And I and my Father are those two; for as
 “ I now witness of my self in a Cause that concerns you,
 “ so my Father also, by a Voice from Heaven, by Descent of the Spirit, by Miracles and Prophecies, testifies my Commission from him.” But the *Jews* regarding only his human Extraction, Jesus replied, “ You
 “ will not receive any Knowledge concerning me or
 “ my Father: Your Acknowledgment of me is the only
 “ Way to bring you to the Knowledge of my Father. I shall depart from you, and then ye will seek
 “ me unprofitably; and by not believing me now,
 “ bring Judgments upon yourselves hereafter. After
 “ the *Romans*, at your Infligation, shall (b) crucify

(a) Mission. See *John 8. v. 12, 13, 15, &c.*

(b) Crucify. See *John 8. 28.*
 “ me,

“ me, there will be such Evidences of my being truly
 “ what ye will not now believe me to be, that you
 “ shall have no Excuse to deny it ; then shall you be
 “ convinced, either to the working of your Repen-
 “ tance or Destruction, that I am the *Messias*, and
 “ came from God, and do nothing but according to
 “ my Commission from him.” Upon this many of
 the *Jews* (c) believed ; to whom addressing himself, he
 says, “ If ye constantly practise my Commands, ye are
 “ truly and really my Disciples, and those Truths which
 “ I shall reveal to you shall procure you a most valua-
 “ ble Freedom.” The other *Jews* then present, that
 were not Believers, taking this as a Reflection on them,
 said, “ We are Heirs to the Promises made to (d) *A-*
 “ *bram*, and were never yet Slaves to any Man ;
 “ how then do we need Freedom ?” Jesus answered
 them, “ I do (e) assure you, you are mistaken in think-
 “ ing yourselves to be free, for there are no such Slaves
 “ as those that live indulgent in Sin ; and being such,
 “ you are far from having any Right to be continued
 “ in God’s Family, which belongs only to (f) Sons.
 “ In the common Account of the World, a Servant is
 “ so far from being a Son, or having any Right to the
 “ Inheritance of the Family, that he is at the mercy
 “ of the Heir when he comes to Age to cast him quite
 “ out of the Family ; and unless the Son make him
 “ free, he cannot be free. And this is the Case of all
 “ such as you, of every indulgent Sinner ; Christ must
 “ free him from his spiritual Bondage of Sin, before he
 “ can be capable of any Benefit of being a Son, even
 “ of a Son by Adoption.” The *Jews* then valuing
 themselves upon their being the Children of *Abraham*
 and of God, he tells them to the first, That if they
 were *Abraham*’s Children they would be like him in his
 Obedience and Virtues, as Children resemble their
 natural Parents in their Nature and Form. And as to
 their being the Children of God, he tells them, Their

(c) Believed. See *John* 8. 30.

(d) *Abraham*. See *John* 8. 33.

(e) Assure. See *John* 8. 34.

(f) Sons. See *John* 8. 35. and so
 on to the End of the Sermon.

Harred to him is a certain Argument that God is not their Father: “ For (says he) I am sent immediately
 “ from God, I came from Heaven, and what I do is
 “ by Commission from God. Ye imitate the Devil,
 “ who from the Beginning was malicious, proud, and
 “ bloody, and soon apostatized from God and the
 “ right Way; for he is an Enemy to Truth, and
 “ therefore for him to lye, and confirm you in Infidelity, is natural to him. I am sure you have no
 “ Fault or Imposture to lay to my Charge, and yet ye
 “ will not believe the Truth when I speak it. If ye
 “ had true Piety in you, then certainly my Doctrine
 “ being from God would be acceptable to you, and ye
 “ would embrace it.” To this the *Jews* could make no Reply, but fell into reproachful Language, calling him (g) *Samaritan* and (b) *Mad-man*; and misunderstanding on what Grounds he gave himself the Preference before *Abraham*, thinking that he had spoken Blasphemy, resolved to confute him to purpose, for they took up Stones to cast at him: But he went out of the Temple, and miraculously preserved himself, passing safely thro’ the midst of them.

But in his Passage he met a Man who had been born blind; and being asked by some of his Followers whether it was the Man’s own Sin, or some Sin of his Parents, that caused this Blindness, he told them, That this Blindness was not sent as a Punishment for his own or his Parents Sin, but as an Occasion to make publick the Glory of God: And Jesus, to demonstrate that himself was the Light of the World in all Senses, said it

(g) *Samaritan*. This Title of *Samaritan* is here fixed on Christ by way of Reproach, not that they thought him so, but because this was an odious Name among the *Jews*: Or else because he conversed with the *Samaritan* Woman, which was against the *Jewish* Rule, *John* 4. 9. he is thought a Deserter of the *Jewish* Law, and so to be one of them.

(b) *Mad-man*. This is render’d, *thou hast a Devil*. All sorts of Diseases were brought on Men sometimes by the Devil; and so generally they that were brought to Christ for Cure, are said to

be possess’d, but especially those who were more strangely affected without any visible Cause of it, were generally thought to suffer this from the Devil’s getting Power to possess them; and of this sort, especially *Mad-men*, who being not discernably sick, did yet behave themselves as if they were in some strong Distemper, which is of an Effect of Disease, and therefore by them supposed to be possessed by some evil Spirit. So in *Justin Martyr*, *Apol.* 2. *They that are possessed are by all Men called mad.*

now,

ST JOHN CHAP. IX. The blind man²⁴
 went his way, and washed, and came seeing.



ST JOHN 9 Verse 7. 119.

JESUS said unto him. Go wash in y^e pool of Si-
 loam (which is by interpretation Sent.) He went
 his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

now, and prov'd it by a Miracle ; for sitting down he made Clay of Spittle, and anointing the Eyes of the blind Man, bid him go and wash in (i) *Siloam*. The (k) blind Man joyfully obeys, and went and washed as he was commanded, and returned seeing ; which so amazed his Neighbours, that they questioned whether this was the same Man that used to beg. He told them positively he was the same Man, and gratified their Curiosity, in telling them who was his Physician, and the Method of his Cure. This Miracle being performed on the Sabbath-Day, the Pharisees lay hold on the Advantage to lessen Jesus, saying, *This Man cannot be of God, because he violateth the Sabbath*. But others with less Prejudice said, *Certainly such Miracles cannot be wrought but by the Finger of God, and therefore cannot be the Work of an Impostor, or a Man of Sin*. The incredulous *Jews* would not believe Matter of Fact in the Man that was blind ; and thinking to make the Thing look intricate, and beyond the Capacity of the Vulgar, who they fear'd might by these Miracles be induced to believe on Jesus, sent for the Parents of the Man who was restored to his Sight, of whom they ask'd these three Questions, Whether he was their Son ? Whether he was born blind ? And whether they knew how, or by whom he was cured ? To the two first

(i) *Siloam*. This was a Pool of limpid Water, which God sent at the Prayer of *Isaiab* the Prophet a little before his Death, to satisfy the Necessities of his People, oppressed with Thirst and a close Siege ; and it stood at the Foot of the Mount *Sion*, and gave its Water at first by Returns and Periods, always to the *Jews*, but not to the Enemies. And those intermitted Springings were still continued, but only a Pool was made from the frequent Effluxes of it.

(k) *Blind Man*. Libertines and Atheists read the Scriptures but to profane them ; and therefore when they meet with any Thing that they think interferes with Reason or Sense, they fail not to make a Game of the sacred Text, tho' in it self proper enough as it stands. There are many seeming Passa-

ges of this kind, viz. *St. John* 9. 17. The blind Man is called blind after he had received his Sight ; and this is rightly translated from the *Greek*. We are therefore to consider, that it is the Style of the Scriptures, and of all Languages, sometimes to give to Persons, and likewise to inanimate Things, the Qualities they formerly had, tho' they have them no more. Thus in *Exod.* 7. 12. *Moses's* Rod is called a Rod when it was changed into a Serpent ; and those who were cured of their Blindness, Deafness, and Lameness, *Mat.* 11. 5. *John* 9. 17. are called the Blind, the Deaf, and the Lame ; and *Mat.* 26. 6. and 10. 3. *Simon* is called the Lepser, after he was cured of his Leprosy, and *Matthew* called the Publican, after he had quitted that Employment.

Questions they answer directly, *We know him to be our Son, and that he was born blind ; but how, or by whom he recovered his Sight, he himself best knows ; he is of Age, let him answer for himself.* The poor Parents durst say no more ; for they had been before caution'd by Agreement among the *Jews*, which was, That if any Man did confess Christ he should be turn'd out of the Synagogue ; and therefore they refer them for a farther Answer to their Son. Him therefore they a second time examine, attempting to draw him from that Opinion of Christ which he seemed to have, by bidding him ascribe the Praise of his Cure wholly to God, and not to look on Christ with any Veneration ; telling him, That if he did it on the Day, and in the Manner aforementioned, it was thereby evident that he had broken the Sabbath, and so came not from God, but was an Impostor, who consequently had no such Virtue or Piety as could contribute any thing to this Matter. The poor Blind still retains his Gratitude, and will not recede from the Truth : *For, saith he, whether he be a Sinner, or no, I know not ; but this I certainly know, That whereas I was blind, I now thro' him enjoy the Blessing of Sight.* This Recognition of Jesus by the poor Man incenses the *Jews*, insomuch that they tax him with being a Disciple ; that themselves were the Disciples of *Moses*, but as for Jesus they knew not whence he was. The poor Man in the Simplicity and Zeal of his Heart, willing to do Justice to his Physician, says, “ It's strange that one should do such Miracles as these, and you learned Men know not whether he be sent from God or not. It is certain on all hands, that an Impostor or false Teacher is not enabled by God to work such Miracles as these, but only pious faithful Servants of God, that came to do his Will, not their own. It is above all human Power to open the Eyes of one born blind : If he were not sent and empower'd by God, he could never do such things as these.” This provoked them so, that they first stigmatize him with the greatest Reproach imaginable,

ginable, that his being born blind was a Mark and Character of some extraordinary Ill in him, which made him very unfit to teach Doctors and Rabbies in Matters of this Moment; and then they cast him out of the Synagogue with Disgrace. But Jesus meeting him, received him into the Church; for he told him he was Christ, and the Man became enlighten'd, believed on him, and paid the Acknowledgment and Adoration to him, that was due to the Messias. But the Pharisees blasphemed: For such was the Dispensation of the divine Mysteries, that the Blind should see, and they who think they see clearly should become blind, because they had not the Excuse of Ignorance to lessen or take off the Sin; but in the midst of Light they shut their Eyes, and doted upon Darkness, therefore did their Sin remain.

Notwithstanding the Obstinacy of the *Jews*, and the repeated Instances of their Malice and Prejudice against Jesus and his Doctrine, he continued his Sermon to the Pharisees, insinuating Reprehensions in his dogmatical Discourses, which like Light shined thro', and discover'd Error: For talking of the Properties of a good Shepherd, and the lawful Way of Intrusion, he proved them to be Thieves and Robbers, because they refused to enter in by him, who is the Door of the Sheep. And upon the same Ground he reprov'd all those false Christs who before him usurped the Title of *Messias*, and proved his own Vocation and Office by an Argument which no other Shepherd would use, Because he laid down his Life for his Sheep. Some would eat the Flesh, others would take the Fleece; but none but himself would die for his Sheep: But he should die first, and then would he gather his Sheep together into one Fold; intimating hereby the Calling of the *Gentiles*. To which Purpose he was enabled by his Father to lay down his Life, and to take it up; and had also endeared them to his Father, that they should be preserved unto eternal Life, and no Power should be able to take them
out

out of his Hand, or the Hand of his Father. For because Jesus was united to the Father, the Father's Care preserved his Son's Flock. But the *Jews*, to requite him for these divine Sermons and excellent Discourses, resume their old Argument of taking up Stones to cast at him, pretending he had blasphemed: But Jesus proved it to be no Blasphemy to call himself the Son of God, because they, to whom the Word of God came, are in Scripture called Gods. But nothing could satisfy them, whose temporal Interest was concerned not to consent to such Doctrine, which would save their Souls by ruining their worldly Advantages.

After this the *Jews* sought again to take him, but he escaped out of their Hands, and went away beyond *Jordan*, where *John* at first baptized; which gave the People Occasion to remember that *John* had done no Miracle, but Jesus had done many. Besides, *John*, whom all Men did revere and highly esteem for his Office and Sanctity, gave Testimony to Jesus. Thus by comparing these Things, many were inclined to believe in him.

After this, Jesus knowing that the Harvest was great, and as yet few Labourers; and that there were many ready to receive the Gospel when it should be preached to them, thought it needful to pray the Lord of the Harvest to incline Mens Hearts to undertake this Office of going and revealing it to them; for as yet there were very few for so great a Work. Besides the twelve Apostles then, he chose (1) seventy-two others, to be to him as Disciples were wont to be to Prophets, that is, to go on his Errands as he should appoint them, which they did by Turns, two at once, as Harbingers proclaiming his Approach, whither he meant to come. In the (m) Preamble of

(1) *Seventy-two*. Of this Number were the Seven, whom afterwards the Apostles set over the Widows, and *Matthias*, *Mark*, and some say, *Luke*, *Justus*, *Barnabas*, *Apelles*, *Rufus*, *Niger*, *Cephas*, (not *Peter*) *Thaddæus*, *Aristion*, and *John*. The rest of the Names could not be recover'd by the best Diligence of *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius*.

(m) See *Luke* 1. 3, &c.

their Commission he tells them they must expect to meet with Dangers and ill Treatment ; “ Yet let not
“ that deter you, says he, or put you upon making
“ Provision for your Journey. Heal the Sick, preach
“ the Kingdom of God approaching. Wherever ye
“ shall be ill treated, shake off the Dust of your Shoes
“ against that Place, as a Testimony of their Obstina-
“ cy and Inhospitality, and of their approaching Ru-
“ in. He that despiseth the Warnings that you give
“ him, despiseth me that sent you ; and he that despi-
“ seth me, despiseth God that sent me ; the Affront
“ offer’d to you is the same as if offer’d to me.” The
Seventy-two being return’d, with great Joy address
themselves to Jesus, from whom they received their
Legation, telling him, that by the Power and Virtue
of his Name the very Devils became subject to them.
Jesus told them it was no Wonder, for he had beheld
(*n*) Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven ; that is, it
was determined that in a short time the Prince of
Devils should be dethron’d, and fall from his great
Power in the World, as Lightning when it flasheth
and vanisheth. Moreover Jesus, to shew the Satis-
faction he received from their faithful Legation, en-
largeth their Commission by an additional general
Power over the Enemy in all manner of Circumstances,
together with an Immunity from all Danger. Then
it was that the Blessed Jesus (*o*) rejoiced in Spirit, giving
Glory to God that he had made Revelations to Babes,
and the more imperfect Persons : This was an Act of
infinite Wisdom, Mercy, and Condescension to the
Weakness of Man, mix’d with all Justice towards the
Contemners of his Promises.

About this time a Student of the Law came to try
his Judgment about the Law or Rule of Life, and
ask’d him what was necessary to be observed for the
attaining that eternal Life which Christ promised ?
He answer’d, The very same which in the Law of

(*n*) *Satan.* See *Luke* 10. 18.

(*o*) *Rejoiced.* See *Luke* 10. 17. *Mat.* 13. 25.

Moses is set down as the main substantial Part of the Law, which he therefore bid him recite to him ; and he recited the Summary of the Law in these Words, “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy “ Heart, with all thy Soul, with all thy Strength, and “ with all thy Mind, and thy Neighbour as thy self. “ The due Performance of this, says Jesus, is all that “ I now require of thee to Salvation.” But the captious Lawyer being scrupulous without Reason, demands what is meant by Neighbour ? This Question Jesus thought best to answer thus by a Parable : “ A “ certain Traveller going from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho* “ was set upon by Thieves, who not only rifled him of “ his Clothes and Money, but so dangerously wound- “ ed him, that they left him expiring on the Ground. “ By chance a Priest came that way, and saw the “ poor Wretch weltering in his Blood : But the Hor- “ ror of the Sight did not affect him, he passes along “ unconcerned. Next comes a *Levite*, as void of Ten- “ derness and Humanity as the Priest. At last the “ dismal Groans of the poor mangled Wretch stir up “ the Curiosity of a *Samaritan* to see the Cause, which “ he no sooner discovers, but mov’d with Compassion “ goes to him, raises his Head, recalls his fainting “ Spirits, and closes his gaping Wounds with rich “ Balsams ; then mounting him on his own Beast, he “ gently conveys the Man to the first Inn, where at “ his own cost he entertains him whilst he staid with “ him, and at his Departure promised the Host to be “ at whatever Expence more should happen.” Our Blessed Saviour applying this Parable to the Lawyer, asked him, “ Which he thought was Neighbour to the “ poor Traveller ?” The Lawyer replied, “ Undoubt- “ edly he that was kind and careful of him.” Then says he to the Lawyer, “ Go thou, and do likewise.” Hereby plainly intimating, that no Distance of Coun- try or Religion destroyeth the true Notion of Neigh- bourhood, but every Person with whom we converse in Peace and Charity is that Neighbour, whom we are to love as our selves. The

ST LUKE CHAP. X.

25

The Samaritan when he saw him had compassion on him.



ST LUKE 10 Verse 34. 124.

And he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an Inn, and took care of him etc.

The Holy Jesus knowing, tho' not dreading, the Malice of the *Jews*, who in many repeated Instances had attempted his Life, resolves at present to prevent any Mischief by withdrawing from all popular tumultuous Places; and leaving *Jerusalem* came to a Village called *Bethany*, where he was chearfully and generously receiv'd by *Martha*, who making great Preparation for his Entertainment, to express her Joy and Affection to his Person, desired Jesus to dismiss her Sister *Mary* from his Feet, who sat there feasting herself with the delicious Sweetness of his Doctrine, and altogether unmindful of the Provisions for the Entertainment. But our Lord commended *Mary's* Choice; and tho' he did not expressly slight *Martha's* Civility, yet he preferr'd *Mary's* Religion and Sanctity of Affections to *Martha's* Generosity. "Thou takest
" a great deal of unnecessary Pains, says he to *Martha*:
" But the only Thing which is absolutely ne-
" cessary, the Hearing my Word in order to keep it,
" is a Thing much more acceptable to me, than the
" entertaining me with so much Sollicitude and Dili-
" gence; and the Advantage of this will continue to
" *Mary* to all Eternity."

Upon occasion of our Blessed Lord's frequent retiring to Prayer, at a Time when he was upon that Duty, his Disciples took into consideration how needful it was for them to be directed in a right Performance of that Duty, and thereupon one of them at his coming out to them besought him to give them a Form of Prayer, which they might constantly use, as *John Baptist* had done to his Disciples. Jesus therefore teaches them that Form of Prayer the second time, which we call the *Lord's Prayer*; enjoins them Assiduity and indefatigable Importunity in Prayer, by a Parable of an importunate Neighbour borrowing Loaves at Midnight, and a troublesome Widow, who by constant Application of her clamorous Addresses, forc'd the unjust Judge to do her Justice. He encourages them

them to (p) pray, by Consideration of the Divine Goodness and Fatherly Affection, far more indulgent to his Sons than natural Fathers are to their nearest Issue ; and adds a gracious Promise of Success to them that pray ; *Ask and it shall be given to you.* Then he exhorts them to Perseverance in (q) Prayer, to be constant and diligent in the Performance of the Duty of Prayer, not only in respect of God, to whom it is a Duty, but of themselves, whose Petitions by Assiduity are most likely to be obtain'd. After this being invited to dine with a Pharisee, he freely inveighs against the ridiculous Superstition and hypocritical Ostentation of the Pharisees ; who affecting outward Neatness in their Manner of Living, neglected to cleanse their Souls from internal Impurities. Instead of which traditional Formalities he advises them to Charity, which is the best way of purifying themselves, their Estates, their Meats and Drinks ; Works of Mercy being more acceptable to God than outward Washings. “ Ye Pharisees, says he, give Tithes
 “ of the meanest Product of your Gardens, but o-
 “ mit the principal Duties to God and Man. These
 “ are the main Things which God requires of you ;
 “ tho’ those other lower Performances of paying
 “ Tithes exactly according to the Law and Custom
 “ among you, ought not to be neglected.” Then pronouncing a Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees, he tells them they are like Graves overgrown with Grass ; and they who see the specious Outsides of them, know not their Insides are dead Mens Bones and Putrefaction, and so are polluted by them. At this a Member of the *Sanhedrim* was so offended, that he told Jesus, “ This Speech of thine seems to reflect on us, and
 “ the Gravity of our Places and Persons.” To which the Holy Jesus reply’d, “ Wo be to you for that Hy-
 “ pocrisy of yours, in appearing to bear such Respect,
 “ as to rebuild the Tombs of those Prophets whom

(p) See Luke 11. 1.

(q) Prayer. See Luke 18. 1.

“ your Fathers kill’d, you your selves having as
“ bloody Thoughts against those that are now sent to
“ you.”

About this time one of the Company, seeing with what Authority he reprov’d and determin’d among the People, addresses himself to our Lord, saying, “ Sir,
“ there is a Controversy between my Brother and me
“ about dividing our Patrimony, I desire to avoid
“ the Delays of a litigious Suit at Law, and refer the
“ Matter to you to conclude between us.” But Jesus declin’d the Office of an Arbitrator, as not having competent Power to become Lord in temporal Jurisdictions. Then he preaches against Covetousness, and the placing Felicity in worldly Possessions, applying to his Occasion the Parable of a rich Man, whose Store was too large for his Barns, but large enough for his Soul; for projecting with himself to enlarge his Barns and lay up all in them, never thinking in the least of dispensing to the Necessity of others, any Part of that which he knew not what to do with, he propos’d to indulge himself in Voluptuousness, and stupidly enjoy himself in his perishing Goods: But he was soon snatch’d from the Possession of them, and his Soul taken from him in the Violence of a rapid and hasty Sicknēss in the space of one Night. This is directly the Case of every one that makes no use of his Increase and Plenty, but only to possess it, and provide for himself by it; not thinking of employing what he hath to spare to the Relief of the necessitous, and the Service of God. Then discoursing of the divine Providence and Care over us, he descends to demonstrate it so low as in the wild Flowers and Grass of the Field, those beautiful Ornaments of Nature, which the Providence of God nourishes and preserves. “ Enter-
“ tain not therefore (says he) any solicitous Thoughts
“ about your worldly Affairs, let no uneasy Anxi-
“ eties disturb your Minds for such Things; for
“ your heavenly Father, who design’d you to an
“ everlasting Kingdom, will not fail to allow you
“ your

“ your Portion here of those Things that are useful
 “ for you.” Then he again exhorts to Alms-deeds, to Watchfulness and Preparation against the sudden and unexpected Coming of our Lord to Judgment, or the Arrest of Death. And in Answer to *Peter’s* Question, whether Christ spoke particularly to his Apostles and Disciples, or to all, he describes the Offices and Sedulity of the Clergy, under the Apologue of Stewards and Governors of their Lord’s Houses; teaches them Gentleness and Sobriety, and not to do evil upon the Confidence of their Lord’s Absence and Delay; and instructs the People even of themselves to judge what is right concerning the Signs of the Coming of the Son of Man. And the End of all these Discourses was, that all Men should repent and live good Lives and be saved.

Whilst Jesus was pressing these Discourses to the People, there were present some that told him of the (*r*) *Galileans*, whose Blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices. Jesus reply’d, that these external Accidents, tho’ they be sad and calamitous, are yet no Arguments of Condemnation against the Persons of the Men, to convince them of greater Guilt than others, upon whom no such visible Signatures have been imprinted. The Purpose of such Chances is, that we should repent, lest we perish in the like Judgment, applying to this the Parable of the barren Fig-Tree, which after much Care and Expence bare no Fruit; intimating thereby, “ This People hath been long
 “ unprofitable, made no Returns to God’s Husbandry
 “ bestowed on them, and yet God hath given them
 “ Space to repent, and sent his Son to dress and ma-
 “ nure them; and if this do not work upon them,

(*r*) *Galileans*. These were a Faction of one *Judas Gaulonita*, a sort of People that taught it to be unlawful to pay Tribute to Strangers, or to pray for the *Romans*; and because the *Jews* did both, they refused to communicate in their sacred Rites, and would sacrifice apart: At which separate Solemnity,

when *Pilate* the *Roman* Deputy had apprehended many of them, he order’d them to be slain, causing them to die upon the same Altars. These were of the Province of *Judea*, but of the same Opinion with those that taught in *Galilee*, from whence the Sect had its Appellation.

“ there

“ there is nothing to be expected but Destruction and
“ Excision.”

At the same time that Jesus was teaching in one of the Synagogues, he observed a Woman that for the Space of eighteen Years had laboured under a fore Disease inflicted on her by the (s) Devil, for she did so extremely stoop, that she could not see the Heavens. Here was a proper Object for his Compassion and Power to exert themselves upon ; and calling the Woman to him, he told her she was free from her Infir- mity, and confirms it by Imposition of Hands ; which finish'd the Cure, for the crooked Woman immediate- ly became straight, and glorified God. Upon this mi- raculous Cure, a certain Ruler of the Synagogue takes occasion to renew the old Question about the Observa- tion of the Sabbath ; for it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had healed the Woman. The Ruler therefore repining at the Unseasonableness of the Action, tells him there was time enough in the six Days of the Week to do these Offices, and not to violate the Sab- bath with them. But Jesus soon made him ashamed by an Argument drawn from their own Practice, who loose an Ox from the Stall on the Sabbath, and lead him away to watering : Ought not then this Woman, says he, on whom Satan hath for so many Years in- flicted a fore Disease, to be cured of it ?

After this, he intending to go to *Jerusalem*, passed thro' the Towns and Cities of *Judea*, reinforcing the same Doctrine he had formerly taught them, and daily adding new Precepts and Cautions, and prudent Insinuations ; advertising them of the (t) Multitudes of those that perish, and the Fewness of those that shall be saved ; that they should not be led away with the Example of the many that neglected the present Opportunity, and after would not find Admission when they should desire it, either into the Church here, or the Kingdom of God at the Day of Judgment : That the Gospel should at length be removed from the obsti-

(s) Devil. See *Luke* 13. 16.
[*Vol.* 3.]

(t) Multitudes, See *Luke* 13. 24, &c.
K nate

nate *Jews*, and consequently Heaven also : That a great deal of Care and Industry was required to get the End of our Christian Faith and Hope, and that a little formal seeking of him, a desiring the Reward upon no farther Pretences, than that the Gospel hath been preached among them, and that they have eat and drank in Christ's Presence, would not serve the Turn, without a careful and due Performance of all that Christ requires of us. As for others, be their Pretences and Confidences ever so great, they shall at the Day of Judgment be utterly rejected, and their wicked Doings rewarded with everlasting Fire. And then what a restless Torment will it be to you, to see the Fathers of the old World, that never saw or heard Christ preach among them, as you confess you have, received by God into his Kingdom, and yourselves excluded? And that tho' but few *Jews* should receive the Faith, yet Disciples should come from all Quarters of the World, and be received and entertained in the Kingdom of God ; and the *Gentiles* that are now afar off, be admitted to Christ's Favour, whilst the present *Jews* thro' their Obstinacy should be cast out.

Whilst Jesus was instructing the People and doing Miracles among them in this manner, some of the Pharisees, that could not with any longer Patience see his Power and hear his Doctrine, being desirous to get rid of him, for a Pretence suggested the Danger he was in from *Herod*, if he staid any longer there, saying, “ Be
“ gone out of *Galilee*, *Herod's* Jurisdiction ; for if thou
“ stay here, he will put thee to Death.” But Jesus, who would not in the least diminish his prophetick Character and Commission by betraying any Dread or Fear, bids them, “ Go tell that subtle Person *Herod*,
“ that I attend the Decree of my Father, and in the
“ mean time perform the Office for which I was sent,
“ not fearing what he can do to me. Behold I cast
“ out Devils, and cure Diseases for the present ; and
“ after a while, when my Course is finished, I am to
“ suffer Death.” After this Reprehension of *Herod's*
Subtlety

Subtlety and Design to kill him, he prophesies that he should die at *Jerusalem*, and intimates great future Woes and Sadnesses to the *Jews*, for neglecting this their Day of Visitation, and for killing the Prophets and Messengers sent from God.

Being upon an Invitation persuaded to go on a Sabbath Day, and dine with one of the Pharisees of great Quality, a Ruler or Member of one of their Consistories, they that had thus invited him treacherously observe what he would do, on purpose to take some Advantage against him, a Thing contrary to all Laws of Hospitality. But he knowing their Malice, by way of Prevention stopp'd their Mouths with the same Argument he used to those that reprehend him for curing the crooked Woman on the (*v*) Sabbath-Day. The Object which was before him, and by which they propos'd to ensnare him, was a Hydropick Person. But Jesus to prevent their Malice asks them this Question: *Is the working of a Cure on a sick Man a Thing forbidden, and so unlawful to be done on the Sabbath-Day?* The Question was plain, and so home put, that his Enemies were at that time also disappointed; and Jesus taking no farther notice of them cured the poor Man of his Dropsy, and dismissed him.

Whilst these Things were transacting at this Dinner, the holy Jesus observ'd how fond the Scribes and Pharisees were to take Precedency of others at the Feast; and therefore knowing their Inclinations, he spake a Parable to them, which imported how much more honourable it is for a Man to set himself below, than above his Place, and how certain a Way it is for him to get Honour: for Humility is the only Thing that is valued or commended, and thought fit to be rewarded either by God or Man. Then he reproaches them for

(*v*) *Sabbath-Day.* The holy Jesus, that he might draw off and separate Christianity from the Yoke of Ceremonies, by abolishing and taking off the strictest *Mosaical* Rites, chose to do very many of his Miracles upon the Sabbath, that he might do the Work of

Abrogation and Institution both at once. For tho' upon all Days Christ was operative and miraculous, yet many Reasons did concur and determine him to a more frequent working upon those Days of publick Ceremony and Convention.

want of Charity in their Entertainments, inviting none but those that were their Equals or Superiors, and consequently able to return their Compliment; but totally neglecting the hungry necessitous Poor. Upon this Occasion one repeated that known Saying among the *Jewish* Rabbins, Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God; that is, 'tis much happier to be feasted by God in his Kingdom than by any Man on Earth. To this Christ reply'd by a (w) Similitude, confirming the Truth of what that Person said; but withal tells them, that this heavenly Feast was what they had often been invited to, but still rejected the kind Invitation, preferring their own worldly Designs and Advantages before it, for which they were rejected, and their Room supply'd by Strangers.

Going from the Pharisee's House, where he had din'd, he was attended by a mighty Concourse of People, whom he tells what they must trust to, if they intended to be his Disciples. (x) "He that doth not prefer me, says he, before all that is nearest to him, nay
" and Life too, is not worthy to be listed under my Discipleship. And whosoever doth not come with a Preparation of Mind to suffer any thing rather than part
" with me, is not fit to engage with me. For as he that
" begins to build, and hath not a Stock to hold out,
" leaves his Work imperfect and becomes ridiculous;
" or as he that designs a War, and hath not Men and
" Money enough to go thro' with it, had better never
" engage in it; so he that undertakes to be a Christian,
" must resolve to renounce all that is precious to him in
" this World, or else he will not be able to hold out."

The Winter now approaching, and the *Jews* Feast of Dedication being at hand, Jesus went up to *Jerusalem* to the Feast, where he preach'd in (y) *Solomon's* Porch. The *Jews*, still jealous of the great Influence he had over the People, attempted to seize him; but he was before-hand with them: for retiring from thence, he

(w) *Similitude.* See *Luke* 14. 16. of the Temple which stood intire from

(x) *He.* *Luke* 14. 26. *Mat.* 10. 37. the first Ruins.

(y) *Solomon's* Porch was that Part

ST LUKE CHAP. XV.

25

And when he came to himself he said,



ST LUKE 15 Verse 17. 18. 133.

*How many hired servants of my father have
bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger?
I will arise, and go to my father, and will say,*

went beyond *Jordan*, where he taught the People in an elegant and persuasive Discourse concerning the Mercy of God in accepting Penitents, in that notable Parable of the Prodigal Son ; “ whose good old Father having
 “ thro’ much Care and Frugality heap’d up a mighty
 “ Fortune, at the Importunity of his youngest, who
 “ was now tired with the repeated Dulness of a rustick
 “ Converse, divides his Substance between his two
 “ Sons. The youngest takes his Part, and immediately
 “ sets out to see the Delicacies of distant Countries,
 “ where in a short Time and in luxurious Living he
 “ melts that Wealth his provident Father had so often
 “ sweated for. When he had spent all, a dreadful Fa-
 “ mine afflicted that Country ; in vain he applies to
 “ those that had shared in the Consumption of his For-
 “ tune ; they are as much Strangers to him now, as he
 “ was to Grace in the midst of his Prodigality. Hun-
 “ ger, an excellent Monitor, soon instructs him what
 “ to do ; he addresses himself to a wealthy Person, from
 “ whom he receives no other Comfort than an Offer
 “ of tending his Swine. Want of Bread compels and
 “ persuades him, he with Blushes accepts the sordid
 “ Offer, and is so far from disdaining the nasty Society
 “ of those filthy Creatures, that he would gladly have
 “ shar’d with them in their coarse Food of Husks and
 “ Acorns. Whilst he meditates on his sad Condition,
 “ Necessity reduces him to his Reason, which strait-
 “ way furnishes him with means to redress his Misery.
 “ He proposes first to acknowledge his Sin against his
 “ heavenly and earthly Fathers, then his own Un-
 “ worthiness to be admitted to Mercy, and lastly to be
 “ restor’d to Favour. Arm’d with this pious Resolu-
 “ tion, he directs his weary Steps towards his injur’d
 “ Father’s House. The tender Parent soon discover’d
 “ the miserable Object, and with eager Fondness ran
 “ to him, embrac’d and kiss’d him, and reinstated him
 “ in his paternal Love ; proclaiming a Jubilee in his
 “ Family for the Return of this Prodigal, who having
 “ been dead and lost in Sin, was now alive again.”

Then he discourses of the Design of the Messias coming into the World, to recover erring Persons from their Sin and Danger, in the Parables of the lost Sheep and Groat. After this he taught them to employ their present Opportunities and Estates, by laying them out in Acts of Mercy and Religion, that, when their Souls shall be dismissed from the Stewardship and Custody of their Bodies, they may be entertain'd in everlasting Habitations. This he enforces under the Representment of an unjust but prudent Steward, "who having abus'd
 " his Trust, by wasting and embezzelling his Master's
 " Goods, is call'd to make up his Accounts with
 " speed, for he was no longer to be entertain'd under
 " the Character of Steward. This Summons presents
 " to his anxious Thoughts the sad Prospect of a miserable Poverty. He thought it below the Dignity of
 " his Character to work, and was ashamed to beg. To
 " provide therefore against the approaching Storm, he
 " sends for his Master's Debtors, and ask'd them what
 " they ow'd in Goods or Rent. The first tells him he
 " ow'd a hundred measures of Oil. He bids him take
 " his Bill with speed and make it only fifty; and so in
 " proportion he accounts with the rest. This the unjust Steward did in hopes of being reliev'd by his
 " Master's Debtors, when he was discarded his Service." By which Parable our Saviour shews, how provident worldly Men are to secure something for the Remainder of their Life, in respect of the Sons of Light, who are born to be injured and abused here; yet from hence teaches them how to secure Friends, which shall last long beyond this short-liv'd World. Therefore he advises them to make (2) Provision for themselves, by so using the fading Wealth they are intrusted with here, that when these transitory Comforts shall forsake them, they may be received into Heaven.

Where-ever the blessed Saviour of the World went, the Fame of his Miracles and Doctrine attracted to him a vast Retinue, some out of Curiosity, others out

(2) See *Luke* 16. 9.

of Necessity still following him ; but none so diligently watch'd, or rather pursu'd him, as the malicious Pharisees, who most industriously lay hold on all Opportunities to accuse him. The most ensnaring Question they could think of, was that of Divorces ; whether it was lawful for a Man upon every Occasion to put away his Wife. Jesus limiting the Permissions of these Separations to the Case of Fornication only, tells them, “ Ye
 “ cannot but remember the strict Union between Man
 “ and Wife, which was appointed by God in the (a)
 “ Creation ; where as soon as they were both created
 “ this was concluded on, That Man was to forsake all
 “ and cleave to his Wife, continuing as inseparably
 “ with her as with any Part of his own Flesh. And
 “ therefore since they are thus esteem'd by God, this
 “ divine Institution ought not to be alter'd by Man.”
 The Pharisees thinking they now had the Advantage of the Argument, object the (b) Precept of *Moses*, wherein he allowed the Husband in some Cases to give a Bill of Divorce to the Wife, in this manner permitting him to put her away. In answer to this Jesus re-

(a) *Genesis* 1. 27. and *ib.* 2. 24.

(b) *Deut.* 24. 1, 2, 3. The Words in *St. Mat.* 19. 7. are, *Why then did Moses command to give a Writing of Divorce, &c.* In *Deut.* 24. 1. they are somewhat different, *Let him write her a Bill of Divorcement, &c.* These Versions seem to make *Moses* and our blessed Saviour to authorize the giving Bills of Divorce ; whence *Libertines* and *Jews* think they have a Liberty to put away their Wives, and look upon that Custom as an express Commandment of God. But the Translators have not been exact enough in rendring the Words of the Original, which signify sometimes a Command, sometimes a Permission. As when *David* says, *2 Sam.* 16. 10. *What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruah ? Let him curse, &c.* And as when God says, *Isa.* 13. 3. *That he commanded his sanctified ones, and called his mighty ones for his Anger.* When it is impossible they can signify Command, since God so expressly forbids to curse the King, and since he is not capable of commanding Tyranny, as some have well

observed. These Words also sometimes signify a Promise, as *Psal.* 133. 3. where it is evident we must translate, *For God has promised the Blessing, and not God has commanded the Blessing.* The same Amendment must be made, *Job* 10. 18. *This Promise (not this Commandment) I received of my Father.* And *Job* 12. and 15. *And I know that his Promise is everlasting Life.* For it was not a Commandment which the Son received from the Father, *that if he did lay down his Life he might take it up again*, but a Promise mentioned *Psal.* 16. 10. *Thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to see Corruption ; and Life eternal is also a Promise and not a Commandment.* Therefore when these Expressions, which signify different Things, do occur, we ought to have regard to the Subject treated on : and since our Saviour expressly calls what *Moses* did in this matter only a Permission, *Mat.* 19. 8. and mentions the first Marriage, which was quite contrary to a Divorce, we should translate, *Why then did Moses suffer to give a Bill of Divorcement ?*

plies thus: “ God in the *Mosaical* Economy, knowing your Obstinacy and perverse Inclinations, lest you should run into greater Sins, allowed a Dispensation in this point, by tolerating Divorces. But this you see was very different from the Appointment of God in the first Institution of Marriage. And accordingly I now determine, that whosoever shall use that Liberty so frequent among you, to put away his Wife for any less Cause than that of Fornication, and then thinks himself free to marry again, that Man is guilty of Adultery in so doing; and so is he that marrieth her that is divorced, for he marrieth another Man’s Wife, which is committing Adultery.” Hereupon his own Disciples began to object, that if Marriage brought such an inseparable Conjunction with it, the Inconveniencies would so far outweigh the Advantages of it, that it were more adviseable not to marry, than to submit to such Hazards. In answer to this Objection Jesus prefers the holy Coelibate (or single Life) before the Estate of Marriage, in them to whom the Gift of Continency is given, in order to the Kingdom of Heaven.

After this, talking of God’s wise Dispensation of the good Things of this World, he shews by way of Parable that we cannot easily enjoy a Heaven here and hereafter; and that the Infelicities of our Lives (if we be pious) shall end in a blessed Condition. This he exemplifies in the (c) Parable of a rich Man and a poor one (d): “ The rich Man abounded in all the Comforts the World could afford, which he selfishly apply’d to his own Pride and Luxury, squandering away the Wealth of Princes to gratify his wanton Appetite. Whilst on the contrary *Lazarus*, poor, sick and afflicted, his Body crufted over with Ulcers, and his Soul fainting through Hunger, in

(c) *Parable*. Some will have this to be a true Story, and not a Similitude; of which Number is *Euthymius*, who out of the Tradition of the Hebrews nameth him *Nymensis*. But there are

more of a contrary Opinion, and who can prove that the Title of this Passage of *Luke* 16. 19. is called, *A Parable of a King of Flesh and Blood*.

(d) *Luke* 16. 19.

ST LUKE CHAP. XVI.

27

The rich man lying in torments.



ST LUKE 16. Verse 23. 137.

*And in hell he lift up his eyes, being
in torments, and seeth Abraham afar
off, and Lazarus in his bosom*

“ vain begs the Fragments of his Extravagancies to
“ support him. At length wearied with Cares and
“ worn out with Diseases, poor *Lazarus* dies, and is
“ by a Guard of Angels safely convey’d to *Abraham’s*
“ Bosom, where he receives the Reward of his for-
“ mer Poverty, Afflictions and Piety. Nor can the
“ rich Man’s Wealth bribe the impartial Hand of
“ Fate; all his earthly Power cannot screen him
“ from the all-searching Eye of that just Judge, who
“ without distinction to his Quality, sent a Summons
“ for him to appear at the Bar of his Justice. In short
“ he also dies, but takes a different Course thro’ the
“ airy Regions, to what poor *Lazarus* had done:
“ Black Fiends, instead of Angels of Light, drag him
“ down to an Abyss of Horror and eternal Pain:
“ where lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, he spies *Laza-*
“ *rus* indulg’d in the Arms of *Abraham*, whilst him-
“ self is afflicted with unintermitting Torments. In
“ vain he begs for Water to cool his scorched Tongue;
“ his Doom is pass’d, which nothing can reverse.
“ *Abraham* rebukes his importunate Request with a
“ mild Reply: Son, says he, all that I can impart to
“ thee in this thy Condition is, only to tell thee what
“ thou art now to expect, and to put thee in mind of
“ the Reasonableness of it; for all thy Portion of A-
“ bundance and Prosperity, of uninterrupted Ease
“ and Felicity, thou hast already enjoyed in thy Life-
“ time, and spent upon thyself without communica-
“ ting them to any that wanted Relief; and on the
“ other side, *Lazarus* has had all his Portion of Af-
“ flictions already, and now ’tis but just that he should
“ have his Bliss, and you your Torment. But be-
“ sides, there is an irreversibile Decree pass’d upon
“ you and all such, and it is impossible for any to re-
“ lease you. Finding no Hopes for himself, he inter-
“ cedes for his Relations left behind him, who by some
“ seasonable Admonition might be caution’d from
“ coming into this Place of Torment. *Abraham* tells
“ him, they have *Moses* and the Prophets for their
“ Guides

“ Guides and Instructors; besides, *Lazarus* could
 “ no more have Liberty to quit the Joys of Hea-
 “ ven to go on this Errand to his Kindred, than
 “ himself could be released from his irremediable
 “ Pains.”

The Epilogue of this Story or Parable, besides the Moral of the wise Dispensation of our Goods to the necessitous, discovereth this Truth also, That the ordinary Means of Salvation are the express Revelation of Scripture, and the Ministries of God's Appointment; and whosoever neglects these shall not be supplied with Means extraordinary, or if he were, they would be totally ineffectual.

Among the many Instances of humane frailty which daily offered to his Inspection, he took special cognizance of the Pharisaical Pride, which through a conceited Opinion of mistaken Perfection, made Men carelessly overlook their own Faults, and superciliously censure and condemn others. This the Blessed Jesus severely condemns in the following Parabolical Discourse: “ Two Men went up into the (e) Tem-
 “ ple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publi-
 “ can. The Pharisee approaches with Praise to God,
 “ but Contempt of his Brother; and boasting of his
 “ Virtues, but forgetting his Sins, he thus presump-
 “ tuously addressed himself: I thank thee, O Lord,
 “ that I am not like other Men, guilty of Extortion,
 “ Injustice, or Adultery; or like this vile Publican,
 “ unworthy to approach thee: I fast (f) twice every
 “ Week, and pay duly my Tithes of every Thing
 “ which I possess. The humble Publican standing at

(e) *Temple*. In the Temple there were two Courts, one for the *Jews*, another for the *Gentile* Profelytes that lived among them. Of these *Gentile* Profelytes there were two sorts; the Profelytes of Righteousness, who were those that had undertaken the whole Law, and were circumcised; and the *Gentile* Profelytes of the Gates. The former of these were admitted with the *Jews* into the inner Court; but the latter, who were not circumcised, were

by the *Jews* so far accounted unclean, according to the Law, that they were not permitted to come into that Court of the Temple called *Holy*, where the *Jews* where; and in that Court, where these latter *Gentiles* worshipped, the *Jews* kept a Market.

(f) *Twice*. That is, every *Monday* and *Thursday*, the second and fifth days of the Week, on which they were wont to hear the Law read in their Synagogue.

“ an

ST LUKE CHAP. XVIII. 28
The Pharisee and the Publican praying.



ST LUKE 18. Verse 10. 138.
*Two men went up into the Temple,
to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the
other a Publican.*

“ an awful Distance in the Court of the *Gentiles*, with
“ a dejected Heart and modest Penitence deploring
“ his Sins, not daring so much as to lift up his guilty
“ Eyes to Heaven, but laying his Hand upon his unworthy yet contrite Heart, implores God’s Mercy on him a sinful Wretch. This Man’s mean Opinion of himself, together with his humble Confession and Contrition, was more acceptable in the Sight of God than all the Pharisee’s good Actions, or arrogant Thoughts of himself.” In Confirmation of which the Holy Jesus decrees, “ That every one that exalteth himself shall be debased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The Multitude seeing by daily Experience the great Benefit that Persons of adult Years received by the bare Touch of our Blessed Lord, desirous that their tender Babes might share in the Blessing, brought their Infants to partake of his divine Benediction. But the Disciples thinking it below the Dignity of their Master to have to do with Children, at first refused Admittance to those that brought them. But Jesus calling for the Children, chides his Disciples for their Mistake in refusing them, charging to introduce them for the future, making this excellent Use to them, *That of such was the Kingdom of Heaven*; intimating by it, That none but such as were endued with Infant-Innocency and Simplicity could lay any Claim to the Kingdom of Heaven. Then laying his Hands upon them, he gave them his Blessing. Happy Infants! who so early received their Saviour’s Benediction, in order to a larger Share of his Grace for the future.

Whilst the Holy Jesus was instructing the Multitude, a young Person of Condition was so charm’d with his Doctrine, that he was fond of being listed in the Number of his Disciples; and in order to qualify himself for the great Employ, he demands what is requisite to make him capable of eternal Bliss. Jesus answers him, “ That Obedience to God’s Commandments was the only Qualification.” The young Man

Man asks, Which? Jesus answers him, “ Those gi-
 “ ven by God to *Moses* ; particularly the second Ta-
 “ ble, which contains the Duty to Man. All these,
 “ says the young Man, I have exactly and sincerely
 “ observed all my Life: What more is required of
 “ me? If thou wouldst arrive, says our Blessed Savi-
 “ our, to the highest Pitch of Religion, in expectation
 “ of the Reward laid up in Heaven for all that sin-
 “ cerely obey me, freely part with all thy worldly
 “ Treasure to the Relief of the Poor; forsake that
 “ earthly Clog which weighs thee down, and thou
 “ shalt find an Advantage in an infinite Return in
 “ Heaven.” Whilst our Lord pronounc’d these Words,
 he survey’d the Youth with Pity, who, when he found
 upon what Terms he must be Christ’s Disciple, and
 that nothing less than quitting his worldly Possessions
 will procure him eternal Happiness, sorrowfully with-
 drew, being unwilling to pay so dear for that Perfec-
 tion. This Advice happen’d upon a Subject very much
 indispos’d for it, which makes our Saviour to discourse
 farther upon the Difficulty of a rich Man’s being sa-
 ved, explaining himself thereupon by the (g) Improve-
 ment of an *Hebrew Proverb*, *That it was easier for a*
Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle than a (b) rich
Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. His Disci-
 ples hearing this were surpriz’d; they therefore ask
 him, Who according to this Rule is qualified for Sal-
 vation? Jesus tells them, “ That to those that trust
 “ in Riches it is a Matter of so great Temptation,
 “ that it is almost impossible to escape; yet nothing
 “ is impossible with God, who can dispose the world-
 “ ly Man’s Heart, that he shall contemn earthly

(g) *Improvement.* It was an ordi-
 nary Proverb among the *Jews*, *That an*
Elephant cannot pass through the Eye
of the Needle, to signify the most im-
 possible Thing. This Proverb Christ
 was willing to improve, by changing it
 from the Elephant to the Camel; a Ca-
 mel being more common in *Syria* than
 an Elephant, and having a Bunch on his
 Back, which is apt to hinder his Pas-

sage through any narrow Entrance. As
 for the Conjecture of *Phavorinus* the
 Grammarian, and others, that will have
 the Word *Camel* to be render’d a *Cable*,
 it is altogether improbable; for then it
 must come from *Camilos*, which can-
 not be, for the Text, *Mat. 19. 24.*
 calls it *Camelos*.

(b) *Rich Man.* That is, he that
 trusteth in Riches.

“ Treasure,

“Treasure, and place his Confidence in God only.” But when the Apostles heard their Master bidding the young Man sell all, and give to the poor, and follow him, and for his Reward promised him a heavenly Treasure, *Peter*, in the Name of the rest, began to think it was their Case, and the Promise also might concern them; and asking him this Question, *What shall we enjoy who have forsaken all and followed thee?* Jesus answer’d, *That they should sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* And extending this Mercy to every Disciple that should forsake either House, Wife or Children, or quit any Advantage and Possession in this Life, for his or the Gospel’s sake, he promises them the Reward of an Hundred-fold by way of Comfort and Equivalency, and in the World to come thousands of Glories and Possessions in Fruition and Redundancy: *For they that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last.* The despised People of this World shall reign like Kings, their Contempt of it shall swell up to endless Glory, and their Poverty to an eternal Satisfaction. And these Rewards shall not be accounted according to the Privileges of Nations, or Priority of Vocation, but Readiness of Mind and Obedience, and Sedulity of Operation after being called.

But lest the Disciples should not perfectly understand what he said of the *last being first, and the first last*, he explains himself in the following Parable: “A certain Landlord, whose Care was as early as the Rising-sun, went out betimes to the Market-Place, where Day-Labourers kept their Stand in expectation of Employment, to hire some to work in his Vineyard; and having agreed with a certain Number of them for a (i) Penny a Day, he set them to work. Wanting still more Help, he went out about the (k) third Hour, and in the usual Place he found several standing there to be hired, with whom he al-

(i) Penny. Our Seven-pence Half-penny.

(k) Third Hour. About our Nine of the Clock in the Morning.

“ so agreed in proportion to the Time. Again, about
 “ the (l) sixth and ninth Hour he went out, and hired
 “ more : And about the (m) eleventh Hour he did
 “ the same. At Night he bid the Steward call the
 “ Labourers, and pay them ; and beginning with
 “ them that were last hired, he paid them the whole
 “ Day’s Wages : But when they came who were
 “ first hired, and had wrought from the Morning,
 “ they thought to receive more than those who came
 “ late into the Vineyard ; but they were mistaken
 “ in their Expectation, for they received no more
 “ than what they were hired for. Upon which they
 “ murmur, saying, Thou hast given them as much
 “ Wages as to us who have laboured all Day long.
 “ The Owner of the Vineyard tells them, he paid them
 “ according to their Agreement ; and as for those
 “ who came later to work, it was an Act of Gene-
 “ rosity in himself to reward them as he pleased, it
 “ being their Misfortune that they were not sooner
 “ employed ; and that being Master of his own For-
 “ tune, he might dispense it as he thought fit, and
 “ give as much to them that came at the eleventh
 “ Hour as to those that came first, and who laboured
 “ as honestly for the Time as they did. (n) Thus
 “ the last shall be first, and the first last.”

Whilst the Blessed Jesus was in *Galilee*, he receives a
 Message from the two Female Disciples and Sisters,
Martba and *Mary*, entreating him to hasten into *Betha-*
ny to relieve their sick Brother *Lazarus*, who was in

(l) *Sixth and ninth Hour.* Twelve
 of the Clock at Noon, and three in the
 Afternoon.

(m) *Eleventh Hour.* About five in
 the Evening.

(n) *Thus.* The Sum of this Parable
 in the Epilogue of it shews, That there
 may be many Reasons which we know
 not, why they that came into the Vine-
 yard last (tho’ they were not sooner, or
 so powerfully, called as others) should
 be rewarded as liberally as they that
 have laboured longer : For a few Acts
 of the Will, if they be more intense and
 heroical, may in equitable Estimation

countervalue the Work of a far longer
 Time ; as the Thief’s confessing Christ,
 when he was on the Cross, when his A-
 postles had forsaken him ; and so *Paul*
 called last was in Labour more abun-
 dant, and ranked with the first : And so
 many that came into Christ in the Cool
 of the Day, when Persecution was over,
 might yet be as sincerely affectionate in
 his Service as they that suffered for him :
 And so some that come to Repentance
 more aged than others, and those that at
 Christ’s preaching came into Christia-
 nity, compared with those that had li-
 ved in the *Jewish Church* a long time.

imminent

ST JOHN CHAP. XI. 39
 JESUS raiseth Lazarus from the dead.



ST JOHN 11. Verse 43. 143.

*And when JESUS thus had spok-
 en, he cried with a loud voice, La-
 zarus come forth.*

imminent Danger. But he (c) deferred his going till *Lazarus* was dead, purposing to give a great Probation of his Divinity, Power, and Mission, by a glorious Miracle, and to give God Glory. Therefore after two Days Delay he called his Disciples to go with him into *Judea*, telling them that *Lazarus* was dead, but he would raise him out of that Sleep of Death. But by that time Jesus was arrived at *Bethany*, he found that *Lazarus* had been dead four Days, and now near Putrefaction. *Martha* and *Mary* hearing of their Blessed Lord's Approach, go out to meet him, and pouring out a Flood of pious Tears for their dear Brother, throw themselves at his Feet, wishing he had arrived sooner, for then they were assured their Brother had not died. At the Sight of these mourning Sisters Jesus suffer'd the Passions of Pity and Humanity, which after some Perturbation of Mind broke into Tears. After this melancholick Salutation, Jesus having by his Words of Comfort and Instruction strengthen'd the Faith of the two Sisters, he demands to be directed to the Place where *Lazarus* was buried; and commanding the Stone to be removed from the Grave, making an Address of Adoration and Thanksgiving to his Father for his continual Readiness to hear him, he says, *Lazarus, come forth*; and he that was dead came forth from his Bed of Darkuess with his Grave-Clothes on, whom when the Apostles had unloosed at the Command of Jesus, he went to *Bethany*. The Performance of this Miracle affected the Multitude very differently; some were convinc'd and believed on him; others wondring, yet maliciously went and inform'd the Pharisees, who upon that Advice called their great Council, whose solemn Cognizance was of the greater Causes of Prophets, Kings, and of the Holy Law: Where one breaking Silence says, "It is not a Time for us to sit still, and permit this Man to go on in the performance of these Miracles without Interruption; for if we suffer him, all Men

(c) *Deferred.* See *John* 11. 4, 5, 6, &c.

“ will believe on him, and the (p) *Romans* will destroy
 “ both our Temple and Nation, our Religion and
 “ Government, and wholly enslave us.” At this great
 Assembly it was that *Caiaphas* the High-Priest (q) pro-
 phesied that one should die for the People, and that
 the whole Nation perish not. And from that time
 they enter’d into a Combination, resolving to put him
 to Death. But Jesus knowing they had passed a de-
 cretory Sentence against him, did not perform any
 publick Miracles among the People of *Judea*, but re-
 tired to the City *Ephraim* in the Tribe of *Judab*, near
 the Defart, where he staid a few Days till the Time of
 the Passover.

When the Feast of the Passover was nigh at hand,
 as Jesus with his Disciples was going to *Jerusalem*,
 he told them the Event of his Journey would be, that
 the *Jews* should deliver him to the *Gentiles*; that they
 should scourge him, and mock him, and crucify him,
 and the third Day he should rise again. Upon this
 mention of his Resurrection, which they vainly presu-
 med would be the Time of his taking all his Great-
 ness upon him, the (r) Mother of *James* and *John*
 came to Jesus, and prostrating herself at his Feet,
 desired that her Sons might have the first Places in his
 Kingdom: For all the Discourses of his Passion, or
 Intimations of the Mysteriousness of his Kingdom,
 could not yet put them into the right Understanding
 of their Condition, they depending still upon the
 Hopes of a temporal Happiness. But Jesus, who knew
 the Weakness of their Apprehensions, gave them an

(p) *Romans*. The *Jewish* Council
 seeing the Miracles which Jesus did,
 this especially of raising *Lazarus*, did
 very much fear that professing himself
 to be the *Messias*, he would soon at-
 tempt to make himself King, and by the
 Reputation which he had gained a-
 mong the People, be quickly assisted in
 it, if he were not timely hinder’d. If this
 were done, the Consequence would be,
 that the *Romans*, to whom they were
 already subject, looking upon this as a
 Rebellion, would come with an Army

and utterly destroy them.

(q) *Propesied*. See *John* 11. 50, 51.
Caiaphas spake in Words that were a
 direct Prophecy of what God had now
 designed should come to pass: Not that
 he meant it in that Sense, or thought at
 all of prophesying; but being in Place
 of Authority among the *Jews* at that
 time, he was a fit Person for God to
 make use of as his Minister to foretel
 the purpose of God, that Christ should
 die for the *Jews*.

(r) *Mother*. See *Mat.* 20. 20, &c.

Answer

Answer in Proportion to their present Conceptions, and future Condition, telling them, “ That if they
 “ desired the first Post of Honour in his Kingdom,
 “ and to be nearest to him, they must take the greatest
 “ Share of the four Cup of his Sufferings, and then sit
 “ in his Kingdom, if his heavenly Father had prepared
 “ it for them : But for any Privilege of Honour or
 “ Dignity above others, they to whom his Father had
 “ designed it should have it.” This bred ill Blood among the other ten Apostles, who were displeased with the Ambition of the two Brothers. But Jesus the true Peace-maker, to prevent any Misunderstanding between them, dehorts them from all Thoughts of Supremacy, by telling them, “ That tho’ the Rulers or
 “ Kings of the Nations were served and benefited by
 “ their Subjects, and received secular Advantages by
 “ their Pre-eminences, and that the Emperors in like
 “ manner were over them, yet Preference among them
 “ was to be attended with all Offices of servile Humi-
 “ lity, and that they must not expect to live after the
 “ manner of the Heathen Princes : For he among them
 “ that affected to be supreme, must be the Servant of
 “ the rest, and that Christ’s Kingdom here is not to be
 “ administer’d in that way which might bring in Splen-
 “ dor or Profit to him, but in a way of Charity, ser-
 “ ving, relieving, providing, and dying for his People,
 “ instead of requiring any such Offices from them.”

The Blessed Jesus going from hence to *Jericho* with his usual Attendants of the Multitude, a fresh Object of Misery presents itself for him to exercise his divine Power on. Poor (s) *Bartimeus*, the Son of *Timæus*, who had long sat in the Road an humble Suppliant to all charitable Passengers for Relief, hearing the Noise of the vast Croud that passed by, asked the Meaning of that numerous Concourse ; and being informed that Jesus of *Nazareth* was among them, with strong and impatient Faith he cried, *Jesus, thou Son of David, have Mercy upon me!* The Standers-by bid him forbear his

(i) *Bartimeus*. See *Mark* 10. 46, &c.

clamorous Noise, supposing he begg'd an Alms : But the Gift he desired was of greater Moment, and therefore he repeats his Importunity, and cries, *O Son of David, have Mercy upon me !* Upon this Jesus stopt, and ordering the blind Man to be brought to him, demands of him the Reason of his importunate Cries ; who in humble manner replied, *Lord, restore my long-lost Sight !* He had no sooner ask'd than the compassionate Jesus answer'd his Request ; for straightway his Eyes receive the welcome Light, and he with Joy makes one of the admiring Croud that followed their Saviour.

As the holy Jesus passed thro' (t) *Jericho*, a certain Man named *Zachcus*, of Wealth and Figure among the Publicans, being desirous of seeing Jesus, could not gratify his Curiosity in the Croud, because he was low of Stature, and therefore climbs up a Tree, from whence he might take a full View and Survey of his sacred Person. Jesus observing the eager Zeal of this honest Publican, calls to him to descend, and invited himself to his House. The overjoyed *Zachcus*, proud of this Honour, hastens to receive his heavenly Guest with the greatest Expressions of Love and Respect ; and to prepare himself the better for the Reception of so excellent a Person, he purges his Conscience by Repentance of his Crimes : *Lord*, says he, *the half of my Estate I give to the Poor, and whomsoever I have defrauded, or as a Publican exacted more from them than was due, according to the Law I make a fourfold Restitution.* This Confession and Repentance was the greatest Entertainment any mortal Man could give our Blessed Lord, who in return gives him this gracious Reward, *This Day are the Mercies of the Gospel dispensed to thee, Zachcus, as being a Believer : and tho' a Publican, thou art one to whom the Promises made to Abraham do belong.*

About this time, our Saviour being not (v) far from *Jerusalem*, upon occasion of his Disciples thinking that he would shortly take upon him the Regal Authority there, he spake this Parable to them : “ A certain Man,

(t) *Jericho*. See *Luke* 19. 1, &c.

(v) *Far*. See *Luke* 19. 11, 12, &c.

“ born

“ born Heir to a Kingdom, took a great Journey to
 “ (w) possess himself of it, and then to return again
 “ in an eminent manner to his own Country where he
 “ was born, and over which he was to reign. And
 “ having many Servants, he intrusted each of them
 “ with a (x) Stock of Money to traffick with in his
 “ Absence, commanding them to improve it to the
 “ best Advantage against his Return. The Reason of
 “ his Journey to this far Country was, because those
 “ his Country-men, over whom he was to reign, set
 “ themselves contumaciously against him, and (y) dis-
 “ claim’d him for their King. At his Return he first
 “ examin’d his Servants with whom he had intrusted
 “ his Talents; he rewarded those who had improved
 “ their Stock, and been faithful in their Trust, with
 “ Gifts proportionable to their Capacities and Im-
 “ provements; but the negligent Servant, who had
 “ slothfully spent his Time without any Advantage,
 “ was condemn’d to perpetual Confinement and Dark-
 “ ness, and his Talent given to him that had most ad-
 “ vanced his Prince’s Interest in his Absence. From
 “ whence sprang up that dogmatical Proposition in
 “ Christianity, *To him that bath shall be given, and from*
 “ *him that bath not shall be taken away even what he bath.*
 “ His Servants having thus accounted with him, the
 “ next thing he does is to take cognizance of those re-
 “ bellious Countrymen (whose King he was by Right)
 “ that, when he went to be enthron’d in another King-
 “ dom, disclaim’d Obedience to him. These there-
 “ fore he called to a severe Account, and command-
 “ ing them to be put to the (z) Sword, they were exe-
 “ cuted as so many Rebels.” After

(w) *Possess.* By this the Blessed Je-
 sus intimated that he was to suffer, and
 rise, and go to Heaven to be installed
 in his Kingdom there.

(x) *Stock.* By this he intimated that
 the Apostles were after his Departure to
 preach to the *Jews*, to gain as many of
 them as they could; to go thro’ all
 their Cities before Christ should thus
 come and shew himself in that regal il-

lustrious manner; and so likewise were
 all other inferior Christians, as well as
 the Apostles, to imploy their Diligence
 and Industry, and according to their Ta-
 lents to bring in some Increase to God.

(y) *Disclaim’d.* This intimates the
Jews standing out against the Faith, as
 it was after the Resurrection preached
 to them by the Apostles.

(z) *Sword.* This was the Fate that
 soon

After this, going from *Jericho*, he cured two blind Men upon the Way. And six Days before the Passover he went to *Bethany*, where he was magnificently entertained by *Simon* the Leper, being accompanied by *Martha*, *Mary*, and *Lazarus*, who sat at the Table with Jesus. (a) *Mary*, to add to the Grandeur of the Entertainment, having a Vial of very costly (b) Ointment, (c) poured it on Jesus, and wiped his Feet with her Hair. (d) The Richness of the Perfume soon diffused itself in every part of the House, which denoted its great Worth. But Malice, which never long wants an Opportunity of shewing itself, instructs the Thief and Traitor *Judas* how to lay hold on any Occasion, who repines at the Vanity of this Expence (as he pretended) because it might have been sold for three hundred Pence, and given to the Poor. But Jesus, who knew the Malice of *Judas*, and the Wickedness he was afterwards to perpetrate, in a very mild Reply, tells them all, that this was an Act of Religion in *Mary*, who perform'd this as a fit Ceremony to solemnize his approaching Death, after which Men used to be embalm'd with Perfumes and Spices: This therefore as an Act of Religion was at this time more seasonable than an Act of Charity: For of the Poor, says he, you have many and daily Objects; but this is the last Opportunity she could have of expressing her Love to me, who am suddenly to be taken from you.

soon beset the *Jesus* after our blessed Saviour's Inauguration in his Kingdom of Heaven.

(a) *Mary*. This was *Mary* the Sister of *Lazarus*, not *Mary Magdalen*.

(b) *Ointment*. This is by the best Interpreters called *Nardipstick*, or genuine *Nard*, free from all Mixture or Adulteration; which was a very great Rarity, by reason of the nine Sorts of Herbs, which (according to *Pliny*) imitate the true *Nard*.

(c) *Poured*. The Word in *St. Mark*, *Ch. 14. v. 3.* which in our Translation is render'd *brake the Box*, is very improperly applied, and very wide of the Meaning of the original *Syntripfaja*;

as is also the Word *Alabastron* unjustly render'd a *Box*: For it is very improbable that *Mary* should break a Box or Vessel of Alabaster or Marble, which all know to be hard; nor is it likely it was in the Nature of a Box, but rather of a Vial, which *Mary* shaking (for that is the proper Signification of the Word *Syntripfaja*) poured it out, and so anointed Jesus's Feet with it. This I take to be the most proper way of rendering these Words, both according to the present Occasion, and the genuine Sense of them.

(d) See *Mat. 26. 6.* *Mark 14. 3.* *J. hn 12. 14.*

ST LUKE CHAP. VII.
A woman anointeth CHRIST'S feet.

30



ST LUKE 7. Verse 37. 38.¹⁴⁸

*She washed his feet with tears, & did
wipe them with the hairs of her head, &
kissed his feet &c.*

It being presently known that *Lazarus*, whom Jesus had lately raised from the Dead, was one of the Company that was treated by *Simon* the Leper, the *Jews* flock'd in great Numbers to see him on whom the Miracle was wrought, as well as the mighty Operator of it. This hinted uneasy Thoughts to the jealous *Sanhedrim*, who having heard that *Lazarus's* Resurrection was the Occasion of many *Jews* believing on Jesus, they consult about (e) destroying him too, as they had before determined of Jesus.

The next Day, being the fifth Day before the Passover, Jesus came to the Foot of the Mount of *Olives*, and sent his Disciples to *Bethphage*, a little Village in the Neighbourhood, commanding them to unloose an (f) Ass and a Colt, and to bring them to him, and to tell the Owners it was done for their Master's Service; and they did so. And when they brought the Ass to Jesus, he (g) rides on him to *Jerusalem*; and the People having notice all the way he pass'd of his Approach, took Palm-Branches in their Hands, and went out to meet him, strewing Boughs of Trees and their Garments in the Way, crying out *Hosanna to the Son of David*: Which was a Form of Exclamation used to the Honour of God in great Assemblies and Solemnities, and signifies Adoration to the Son of *David*, by the Rite of carrying Branches. But this Honour was so great, and unusual to be done even to Kings, that the Pharisees, knowing this to be an appropriate manner of Address to God, said one to another, hear ye what these Men say? For they were troubled to hear the

(e) *Destroying.* The *Jews* had, thro' Jealousy of *Lazarus's* causing many to confess Christ, resolved to put him to Death; but God in his Providence was pleased to preserve him as a Monument of his Glory, and a Testimony of the Miracle which Jesus perform'd on him, thirty Years after the Death of Jesus. *Epiphani. contra Manich.*

(f) *Ass.* See *Mat.* 21. 2. *Mark* 11. 2. *Luke* 19. 31.

(g) *Rides.* Jesus rode not for any Weakness, having formerly gone thro' all

Palestine on Foot; but thereby using that Privilege which belong'd to Judges (*Speak you that ride on white Asses*) to signify his Approbation of those due Acclamations which he knew would that Day be given him, v. S. as to the Messiah; that so the Prophecy, *Isa.* 62. 11. and *Zech.* 9. 9. might be accomplished, wherein it's said, That the King of the *Jews*, the Messiah, should come riding on an Ass's Foal, which, tho' it were a meek, was yet also a royal Gesture and Ceremony.

People pay such Reverence, being jealous of his growing great among them.

When the holy Jesus had thus entred *Jerusalem* in Triumph, he went up to the Mount of *Olives*; and from thence beholding *Jerusalem*, in consideration of the many Infelicities and Calamities which were to befall it, he wept over it, saying, “ O that thou also
 “ wouldst yet consider and lay to heart, before it be
 “ too late, even in this critical Juncture, what concerns thy future Tranquillity and Prosperity! But
 “ now thou shuttest thine Eyes against them, and wilt
 “ not consider. But thy Punishment for this shall be,
 “ that within awhile thine Enemies shall (*b*) besiege
 “ thee close, and famish thee: They shall take thy
 “ City, destroy all that are in it, and utterly demolish
 “ the Temple; and all this shall befall thee for not considering what I have by way of Message, deliver’d
 “ from God to thee.” All which literally fell out, and was verified in the most minute Circumstances and Particulars.

Jesus descending from the Mount of *Olives* to the City (which was still but part of his Cavalcade) he went into the Temple, purging it of all Uncleaness and Profanation, not suffering so much as the least Vessel to be carried thro’ or into it which did not belong to it. Thither also the Acclamations of the People follow’d him, which was no small Mortification to the Pharisees, who, with the Noises abroad, and the restless Tumults of Envy and Hatred within their own Breasts, were ready to burst: And that which added to their Vexation was, that notwithstanding all their Endeavours to suppress his Glories, in despite of all their Stratagems, the whole Nation was become, as it were, one Disciple to the glorious *Nazarene*. To confirm them in which Opinion, he continues to cure the Blind and Lame, and others, of Infirmities under which they labour’d.

(*b*) *Besiege thee.* In the Mount of *Olives*, where Jesus shed Tears over perishing *Jerusalem*, the Romans first pitch’d their Tents, when they came to its final Overthrow.

But

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XXI.
The Lords servants slain by the Husbandmen.



ST MATTHEW 21 Verse 35. ^{153.}

*And the husbandmen took his servants,
and beat one, and killed another, and stoned
another. Again he sent other servants, etc*

But notwithstanding the Pharisees and other Grantees among the *Jews* were so malevolent to the holy Jesus, who had done so much good among them ; yet there were others of as much Consideration and better Disposition, who were otherwise inclined : For whilst Jesus abode at *Jerusalem*, certain (i) *Greeks*, who came to the Feast to worship, made their Address to *Philip*, that they might be brought to Jesus. *Philip* acquainted *Andrew* with it, and they both told Jesus ; who, having admitted them, discoursed before them of many Things relating to his Passion ; tells them, that his (k) Death would be a Means of bringing more to the Faith than his Life would be, as it fares with Corn sown in the Earth, which by that means dies, but arises with Abundance and Increase.

After this, his human Nature beginning to dread the approaching Hour, he confess'd the Frailty of it, and would by Prayer have endeavoured to avert the bitter Cup ; but recollecting, it was to suffer that he came into the World, he therefore would not pray against it, but rather desired God to finish the grand Purpose of glorifying his Name. To which he was answer'd by a Voice from Heaven ; *I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.* But neither this, nor the whole Series of Miracles that he did, the Mercies, the Cures, nor the divine Discourses, could gain the Faith of all the *Jews* ; for many of the Rulers of them, who believed on him, durst not confess him, because they loved the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God. Then Jesus again exhorted them all to believe in him, that so they might in the same Act believe in God ; that they might approach unto the Light, and not abide in Darkness ; that they might obey the Commandment of the Father, whose express Charge it was, that Jesus should preach this Gospel ; and that they might not be judg'd at the last Day by the

(i) *Greeks.* See *John* 12. 20. *Mat.* 21. 15. *Luke* 19. 39. These *Greeks* were Gentile Worshipers, Profelytes of the Gates ; who being not permit-

ted to celebrate the Feast with the *Jews*, were yet come up to pray in the outward Courts of the Temple.

(k) *Death.* See *John* 12. 24, &c.

Word that they had rejected, which Word to all that observe is everlasting Life.

After this Sermon Jesus retiring to *Bethany*, he abode there all Night; and on the Morrow returning to *Jerusalem*, on the Way being hungry, he passed by a Fig-tree, where expecting Fruit he found none, and he cursed the Fig-tree, which by the next Day was dry'd up and wither'd: Upon Occasion of which preternatural Event, Jesus discoursed of the Power of Faith, and its Ability to produce Miracles; but this must not be by placing any Confidence in themselves, but in all Humility of Prayer to God; assuring them, that whatsoever they shall thus pray for, they shall most certainly obtain. Jesus having return'd to the City, came into the Temple, and preach'd the Gospel; whereupon the Scribes and Elders, knowing he had no Authority from the *Sanbedrim*, question'd his Commission, asking him, who gave him Authority to do these Things? This Question Jesus thought fit to answer by asking another, which he knew would silence them: And therefore he would know their Opinion of *John*, whether he derived his Commission from God or from Man? The *Jews* soon found they were ensnared in their own Net, being unable to make any Reply: For they consider'd, that if they should say, *John* received his Power of Men, they would be in danger of being stoned by the Multitude, who esteem'd *John* as a Prophet: And if they should say from (1) Heaven, they well knew he might justly reproach them for not believing him. Unable then to extricate themselves out of this difficult Dilemma, they conclude Ignorance to be the best Answer, and declare they could not tell whence he deriv'd his Power. To which the Holy Jesus replies; “ Neither is it
 “ necessary for me to give you any Account of my
 “ Commission or Authority, since you grant, that a
 “ Man may lawfully preach and baptize, and enter-
 “ tain Disciples, as *John* did, without the Appro-

(1) Heaven. See *Mat.* 23. 25. *Luke* 20. 6, &c.

“ bation or Permission of the *Sanhedrim*. Is it not a
“ strange thing, that you, who pretend so much to
“ be God’s knowing and obedient Servants, should
“ yet stand out the most obstinately of all others a-
“ gainst his Commands, and Messengers sent from
“ him, when the meanest Publicans and the Multitude
“ forsake their former Ways, repent, and believe the
“ Gospel?” Then he proceeded to reprove the Pha-
risees and Rulers by the Parable of two Sons; the
first of whom said to his Father, who commanded him
to work in the Vineyard, he would not; but being
soon sensible of his Disobedience, repented and obey-
ed his Commands. The second gave his Father good
Words, promising Obedience, but not performing.
Jesus asking the *Jews*, which of these they thought
the most dutiful Son? They answer, the first. Then
he immediately applying the Parable to themselves,
tells them, That the Publicans and Harlots, the worst
of Sinners in their Opinion, by receiving the Gospel,
which they rejected, should enter Heaven before them:
Meaning by this Parable, that Persons of the greatest
Improbability were more heartily converted than they,
whose Outside seem’d to have appropriated Religion
to their Labels and Frontlets, to mere Forms and Ce-
remonies.

“ To this he added the Parable of the Vineyard,
“ which the Owner let out to Husbandmen, who
“ killed the Servants sent to demand the Fruits, and
“ at last the Son also, that they might seize the Inhe-
“ ritance. And asking the Pharisees what they
“ thought the Owner would do to those Husband-
“ men: They expressed great Indignation against
“ those false and bloody Servants, affirming them
“ worthy of utter Destruction; that the Lord of the
“ Vineyard might provide him better Officers, who
“ should pay him his Rent duly.” Tho’ when Jesus,
upon this Answer of theirs, approv’d the Reasonable-
ness of it, and affirm’d it should thus besal (m) them

(m) *Them.* See *Luke 20, 19.* *Matthew 21, 45.*

indeed, (by which they began to perceive that he spake this Parable against them) they with Indignation deprecate the Sentence, saying, (n) *God forbid*. Then pronouncing a sad Commination to all such as should stumble at him, the Rejected tho' Chief or Corner-stone, or on whom this Stone should fall; he positively declares to the *Jews*, that the Gospel, and the Privilege of being the only Church and People of God, should be taken from them, and given to such as should practise what the Gospel requires. After these, and some other Reprehensions, which he so veil'd in Parable, that it might not be expounded to be Calumny, (altho' such sharp Sermons had been spoken in the People's hearing; but yet so transparently, that themselves might see their own Iniquity in those modest and just Representments) the Pharisees would fain have seiz'd him, but they durst not for the People: Therefore they resolved, if they could, to (o) intangle him in his Talk, and accordingly sent out Spies, who should pretend Sanctity and Veneration for his Person; who, with a goodly insinuating Preface, that Jesus was impartial in his Thoughts and Words, regarded no Man's Person, but spake the Word of God with much Simplicity and Justice, would seem to colour their mischievous Designs against him. The Spies they sent were of two contrary Parties, some Pharisees, others (p) *Herodians*; that whatsoever Answer he should make to any of their Questions, one Party might be offended with him. They come to him therefore with this flattering, but insidious Prologue; "We know, " that without all Fear of Men or Partiality, thou " wilt tell us truly what is our Duty toward (q) God: " Tell us therefore, is it just, according to the Law " of God, to give Tribute to *Cæsar*, or no?" Jesus knowing their treacherous Design, said; " Ye Hypo-

(n) *God*. See *Luke* 20. 16.

(o) *Intangle*. See *Mat.* 22. 15, &c.

(p) *Herodians*. The *Herodians* were not a distinct Sect from the Pharisees

and Sadducees; but some of them Sadducees, as appears by comparing *Mat.* 16. 16. with *Mark* 8. 15.

(q) *God*. See *Mat.* 22. 16, &c.

" crites,

“ crites, why endeavour ye, under the Pretence of
 “ reverencing me, to insnare me? Shew me the (r)
 “ Tribute-Money.” And they brought him a Penny.
 Then he demanded of them, whose Image was (s)
 inscribed upon it? They confess’d it to be the Signa-
 ture of the *Roman* Emperor: Whence Christ conclu-
 ded, that they who acknowledg’d *Cæsar’s* Supremacy
 over them, ought to pay the Tribute due to him as
 supreme; for the Law of God requiring that every
 one should have that which belongs to him, he par-
 ticulariz’d in the Duties of paying Acknowledgment
 to Kings in their just Dues, as Acts of Piety are due
 to God. This was a mighty Disappointment to them,
 who thought, that, upon answering this Question, he
 must in all probability fall under the Displeasure of
Cæsar, or the People; but they, finding that he by his
 incomparable Wisdom broke their Snare, (t) admi-
 ring his Prudence, departed from him, without hopes
 of gaining any Advantage from his naked and true
 Simplicity. But tho’ they were disappointed in their
 nicely-laid Stratagem, yet from thence this general
 Good accrued to Mankind, that our Blessed Saviour
 by means of their intended Treachery, establish’d an
 Evangelical Proposition for ever, saying, *Give unto*
Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the
things that are God’s.

(r) *Tribute.* The Question about the
 Tribute was the Cause of a great Dis-
 pute, because of the numerous Sect of
 the *Galileans*, who denied it, and be-
 cause of the Affections of the People,
 who lov’d their Money, and their Li-
 berty, and the Privileges of their Na-
 tion. The Head of this Sect of the *Ga-
 ileans*, was one *Judas Gaulonita*, or
Gallileus, according to *Josephus, Hist.*
l. 18. c. 2. who being join’d by one *Sad-
 dok*, a Priest, solicited the People to a
 Defection, telling them that God was
 to be their only Master and Prince, and
 no Mortal to be acknowledg’d as such;
 that the requiring a Tax from them, if
 they should pay it, was a manifest Pro-

fession of Servitude, and that it was
 their Duty to vindicate their Liberty:
 By which means he raised a great Se-
 dition among the *Jews*, and was the
 Cause, under pretence of defending
 the publick Liberty, of innumerable
 Mischiefs to the Nation.

(s) *Inscribed.* This plainly denoted
 their Right of Submission, and conse-
 quently of paying Tribute to the *Ro-
 mans*: For the coining of Money is
 part of the supreme Power, or regal
 Prerogative; and they being a con-
 quer’d People, and their Coin bearing
Cæsar’s Inscription, the Tribute must
 be supposed due to him.

(t) See *Mat. 22. 22.*

The Blessed Jesus having so excellently, and so much to their Admiration answer'd the Pharisees, the Sadducees bring their great Objection to him against the (v) Resurrection, by putting the Case of a Woman married to seven Husbands, and whose Wife should she be in the Resurrection? Thinking that to be an impossible State, which engages upon such seeming Incongruities, that a Woman should at once be Wife to seven Men. But Jesus first answer'd their Objection, telling them, that all those Relations, whose Foundation is in the Imperfections and Passions of Flesh and Blood, and Duties here below, shall cease in that State; which is so spiritual, that it is like to the Condition of Angels, amongst whom there is no Difference of Sex, no Genealogies or Derivations from one to another: And then by a new Argument proves the Resurrection by one of God's Appellatives, who did then delight to be called the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Iaac*, and the God of *Jacob*. For since God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living, unto him even these Men are alive: And if so, then either they now exercise Acts of Life, and therefore shall be restored to their Bodies, that their Actions may be complete, and they not remain in a State of Imperfection to all Eternity; or, if they be alive, and yet cease from Operation, they shall be much rather raised up to a Condition which shall actuate and make perfect their present Capacities and Dispositions, lest a Power and Inclination should for ever be in the Root, and never grow up to Fruit or Herbage, and so be an eternal Vanity.

Tho' the Pharisees and Sadducees were no great Friends to one another; yet in the Cause against the Saviour of the World they join'd Forces: But notwithstanding this Union in part, they were glad upon any Occasion to see one another foil'd. Of which, an Instance was plain in the Sadducees Question about the Resurrection; for the Pharisees were well pleased, not

(v) See *Mark* 12. 19, &c.

that Jesus spake so excellently, but that the Sadducees were confuted; and therefore hoping for better Success, they attack him with another Question, more out of Curiosity than any pious Desire of Satisfaction. But at last, after all their piqueering, Jesus was pleased to ask them a Question concerning *CHRIST*, whose Son he was? They answer'd, the Son of *David*. But he replying, *How then doth David call him Lord? saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right Hand, &c.* To which they could not answer.

After this, Jesus gave his Disciples caution against the Pride, Hypocrisy and Oppression of the Scribes and Pharisees; and commended the poor Widow's Oblation of her two Mites into the Treasury, preferring her pious Intentions, who threw in her All, before the great and mighty Superfluities of the Rich, who had vastly still to spare. All this was spoken in the Temple; the goodly Stones and Ornaments of which when the Apostles beheld with Wonder, they being beautiful and firm, Jesus at the same time prophesies the (*w*) Destruction of the Place. Concerning which Prediction, when the Apostles, being with him at the Mount of *Olives*, ask'd him privately of the Time and Signs of so sad Events, he tells them one Prognostick of the Destruction that shall be; that many Deceivers shall arise, pretending to be the Messiah. Another Forerunner of it is, that great Comotions and Tumults shall be in *Judea*, before the *Romans* come to destroy them utterly. Then he discoursed largely of his Coming to Judgment against the City of *Jerusalem*, and from thence interweav'd Predictions of the Universal Judgment of the World, of which this, tho' very sad, was but a small Adumbration: Adding Precepts of Watchfulness, and standing in Preparation, with Hearts filled with Grace: All which he enforces with the pathetick Parable of the "Ten Virgins, who at that Point of Time, spoken of the heavy Visitation of the People, took

(*w*.) See *Mat.* 24. 3. *Mark* 13. 3. *Luke* 21. 7.

“ their Lamps and went forth to meet the Bride-
“ groom. Five of them were prudent and watchful ;
“ the other vain and improvident. The wise five had
“ provided themselves with a Stock of Oil sufficient to
“ furnish their Lamps during their Expectation of the
“ Bridegroom’s Coming ; but the five foolish took no
“ more with them than for their present Occasion.
“ After long waiting, heavy Sleep seal’d their weary
“ Eyes ; but at Midnight they were alarm’d with the
“ Cry of the Bridegroom’s Coming. The five wise,
“ who had trimm’d their Lamps before they went to
“ rest, were not surpriz’d with the sudden Summons,
“ but joyfully prepar’d to meet the Bridegroom ;
“ whilst the five foolish careless Virgins, rousing at
“ the Noise, found their Lamps extinct. In vain they
“ implore a Supply of the others ; they are forced to
“ seek for more Oil elsewhere ; in which Time the
“ Bridegroom arrives, who receives the five wise, and
“ takes them with him to the Place of the Nuptial
“ Entertainment, and orders the Door to be shut.
“ The five foolish Damsels having long loiter’d about
“ for Oil to recruit their decay’d Lamps, come to the
“ Bridegroom’s Gate, demanding Entrance with as
“ much Assurance as those that had paid the most
“ strict Attendance. Their importunate Cries reach
“ the Bridegroom’s Ear, who tells them there was
“ no Room for such Loiterers, whose Sloth and Im-
“ providence had betray’d them to the Loss of any
“ Entertainment with him.” By this Parable, the
Blessed Jesus hinted to his Disciples the Necessity of
Watchfulness, that not knowing the Day or Hour of
the Son of Man’s Coming, they might be always rea-
dy to receive him. This Parable of Diligence and
Watchfulness he enforced with another, of the Talents
intrusted with the faithful and slothful Servants, there-
by pressing the Observance of those Duties more ear-
nestly to them. And then for the Encouragement of
the diligent, and Terror of the slothful, he proceed-
ed to tell them, that when Christ should come to
Judgment,

Judgment, whether to execute Punishment on this People, or to doom every Man for his future eternal Being, then should his Apperance be glorious and full of Majesty. (x) All the People of the *Jews*, Believers and Unbelievers, and all that ever liv'd in this World, every one with whom God had intrusted any Talent, should by the Angels be gather'd before him : And all the obedient Followers and Disciples of his he should place in a State of the greatest Dignity ; but the unfaithful and disobedient should be liable to Judgment. Then should he, as King and Judge, distribute the Joys and Comforts of the Kingdom of Heaven, v'hich before all Eternity were designed to be the Reward of all the faithful Servants of God, according to every Man's Works of Piety and Charity performed in this Life, (y) express'd in St. *Matthew* by feeding and entertaining Christ, by clothing his naked Body, tending him when he was sick, relieving, assisting, providing for and visiting him in Restraint. Then should those humble faithful Disciples of his, as not conscious of any such Acts of Service or Charity shewed to Christ, decline the Praise of such Merit. To which the Blessed Jesus would reply, inasmuch as they had performed those good Offices to the meanest Wretch alive, that was Partaker of that humane Nature, which he honour'd by assuming it, they had done it to him. But for the slothful and unfaithful, he should pronounce them accursed, and adjudge them to those eternal Woes design'd for the Devil, and those Angels that sinn'd and fell with him, for their Impiety and Uncharitableness, in refusing to assist him, when he was famish'd with Hunger, starv'd with Cold, sick and in Prison. And then, as not conscious of this Cruelty and Impiety, they should begin to expostulate, that they never acted thus unfriendly by Christ, never saw him in any Distress without relieving him. But he should answer them ; Inasmuch as ye did not succour and comfort the mean-

(x) See *Mat.* 25. 32.(y) Express'd. See *Mat.* 25. 35, 36, &c.

est of my Disciples, ye refused those good Offices to my Person. And then he concludes his Sermon with a Narrative of his Passion, foretelling, that within (z) two Days he should be betray'd and deliver'd by the *Jews* to the *Romans*, to die after their Manner, which was to be fasten'd on a Cross.

The *Jews* having long and impatiently waited for an Opportunity of taking of Jesus in a formal Way of Law, had hitherto been frustrated in all their Attempts, tho' laid with all the insidious Treachery that Malice could invent; for they durst not attack him by open Force, because of the great Opinion the Multitude had of him, and who might revenge any Harm done to him upon the Administration: However, they resolve to leave no Means untry'd to get him into their Power, and in order hereunto they call a great Council to consult how to ensnare him: But whilst the Scribes and Pharisees were racking their Brains to find out a Way to betray him, a wicked officious Man, at the Instigation of the Devil, furnishes them with an Instrument: *Judas Iscariot*, one of the Twelve, hearing of this Meeting of the *Jews*, and knowing that they of the *Sanhedrim* were desirous of apprehending Jesus privately, goes from *Bethany* in haste, and offers himself to betray his Master to them, if they would give him a considerable Reward. The Council overjoyed at this Opportunity, as readily offer as his Avarice was to crave, and they agreed with him for thirty Pieces of Silver. A poor Price for the Saviour of the World to be valued at by his undiscerning unworthy Countrymen. The Bargain thus made *Judas* retires from the Council, watching such an (a) Opportunity as they meant, that is, an Opportunity of taking him privately, when the People should not be aware.

The (b) next Day was the first Day of unleavened Bread, on which it was necessary they should kill

(z) Two Days. See *Mat.* 26. 2.

(a) Opportunity. See *Mat.* 26. 4, 16.

(b) Next Day. The Thursday Evening, wherein the thirteenth Day of the

(c) kill the Passover ; therefore Jesus sent *Peter* and *John* to the City to a certain Man, whom they should find carrying a (d) Pitcher of Water to his (e) House, him they were to follow, and there to prepare the Passover. These two Disciples went, and accordingly found the Man in the same Circumstances, and prepared for Jesus and his Family, who at the Evening came to celebrate the Passover.

B O O K VI.

The fourth Year, beginning at the fourth Passover after the Baptism of Christ.

AL L Things being provided, and the Time appointed drawing near, the Holy Jesus, who was now about to finish the great Work of Salvation, came with the rest of the Apostles to *Jerusalem*, there to eat the Passover with them before his Passion. Having eat the Paschal Lamb with his Disciples, and knowing that his (f) Hour was come that he should depart out of this World to the Father, and therefore what he had to say or do to his Disciples must be done presently, he thus express'd the Constancy of his Affection to them. Rising from Supper after the manner of a Waiter, he puts off his Upper-Garment, girds his Under-Garment with a Towel, and pouring Water into a Basin, puts himself in the humble Posture of the meanest Servant to wash his Disciples Feet, and after wipes them with

the Month *Nisan* was concluded, and the fourteenth Day began, the Day of Preparation to the Feast of unleavened Bread, whereon they put all Leaven out of their Houses, that is, on the Evening which began the Paschal-Day.

(c) Kill. See *Luke* 22. 7.

(d) Pitcher. See *Mark* 14. 73, &c.

[Vol. 3.]

(e) House. This is supposed to be the House of *John* surnamed *Mark*, which had always been open to this blessed Family, where Jesus was pleased to finish his last Supper, and the Mysteriousness of the Vespers of his Passion.

(f) Hour. See *John* 13. 1, &c.

M

the

the Towel; not only by this Ceremony, but in his Discourses instructing them in the Doctrine of Meekness and Humility, which he the Master by his great Condescension had made sacred, and imprinted the Lesson in lasting Characters, by his own Example. *Simon Peter* thinking he ought in good Manners to decline this great Condescension, far below the Dignity of his Master, was unwilling to be wash'd by him, till Jesus told him, he must renounce his Part in him, unless he washed him. On which he cried out, *Lord, not only my Hands, (g) but my Feet and my Head.* Jesus tells him, he that is, *(h)* wash'd before, needs no farther washing, save only for the Feet, which by daily conversing and walking on Earth, will be apt to gather Dirt, and need continual cleansing. So is it, says he, among my Disciples, the *(i)* Body of whom is clean, but the Feet are foul, that is, one base, unworthy Person among them, meaning *Judas*, the Person that had now undertaken to deliver him.

After the eating of the Paschal Lamb, the blessed Jesus knowing his Time was short, and that he had much to do in it, hastens to the *(k)* second Supper, at which he

(g) But my Feet. Jesus here tells *Peter*, that the Ablution or Washing of the Feet was sufficient for the Purification of the whole Man; relating to the Custom of those Countries, who used to go to Supper immediately from the Baths; who therefore were sufficiently clean save only their Feet, by reason of the Dust contracted from the Baths to the eating Rooms; from which, when by the hospitable Master of the House they were caused to be cleansed, they needed no more washing.

(h) Wash'd. The *Hebrews* had two sorts of Washings, one of the whole Body, and which was called Immersion, the other of the Hands or Feet, called Dipping or Pouring of Water. The former was used by the Priest (after the building of the Temple) before the entering into the Temple, and also by the Proselytes at their Initiation: The latter was of every Day's Use: And to these our Saviour seems to refer, intimating by being wholly wash'd, him that hath undertaken his Discipleship,

and so renounced the Profaneness of his former Life; and he that had done so is said to be wholly wash'd, and need never to be wash'd again; in Imitation of the Ceremony of Initiation, which was never repeated among the *Jews*. All that is needful to him, is the pouring of Water, and so rinsing of the Hands or Feet, the daily Ministry of the Word and Grace of Christ (thereby signified) to cleanse and wash off the daily Frailties and Imperfections of our weak Nature after Conversion.

(i) Body. See *John* 13. 10.

(k) Second Supper. It was the Custom of the *Jewish* Nation, after the eating of the Paschal Lamb, to sit down to a second Supper, in which they eat Herbs and unleavened Bread, the *Major-Domo* first dipping his Morsel, and then the Family; after which the Father of the Family brake Bread into pieces, and distributed a Part to every Guest, and first drinking himself, gave to the rest the Chalice fill'd with Wine, according to the Age and Dignity of the Person, adding

he intended to institute the perpetual Memorial of himself sacrificed for the Sins of the World. Jesus therefore being to celebrate this Supper, changed the Forms of Benediction, turned the Ceremony into a Mystery, and gave his Body and Blood in a sacramental religious Configuration; instituting at the Close of this second Supper, the venerable and blessed Sacrament; which from the time of its (l) Institution, is called the Lord's Supper; which Rite Jesus commanded the Apostles to perpetuate, in Commemoration of him their Lord until his second Coming. And this was the first Delegation of a perpetual Ministry, which Jesus made to his Apostles, in which they were to be succeeded in all the Generations of the Church.

Our Blessed Lord having instituted the Method of that Memorial which his Apostles and their Posterity were to continue, tells them, that he was not long to abide with them, that this was the last Passover he should celebrate with them, till they feasted with him in the Kingdom of Heaven; and at last labouring under great Perturbation of Mind, he told his Apostles, that one of them should (m) betray him. This was a very surprising Arrest upon the Reputation of each Disciple, except the guilty one; every one but he looking upon themselves as innocent, yet liable to the Imputation of Guilt under so general an Accusation. The Apostles with great Perplexity of Mind, survey one another, but cannot guess at the guilty Person; Judas the Traitor being the farthest from their Suspicion, because he was the Lord's Steward, and intrusted by him with the dispensing of that little temporal Cash the holy Family were possessed of. Whilst they were under this Anxiety of Mind, Simon Peter bethought himself of a Method to

ding to each Distribution a Form of Benediction proper to the Mystery, which was Eucharistical, and Commemorative of their Deliverance from Egypt. See *John* 13. 2.

(l) *Institution.* See *Mat.* 26. 26. *Mark* 14. 22. *Luke* 22. 19.

(m) *Betray.* See *John* 13. 2. Jesus

made this Prediction, that they might not be scandalized at the Sadness of his Passion, but be confirm'd in their Belief, seeing a great Demonstration of his Wisdom and Spirit of Prophecy, in this very Instance of foretelling the Treachery of Judas Iscariot.

come at the Truth of this matter ; and that was by hinting to *John* the Favourite Apostle, that always sat next to Jesus, that he would prevail with Jesus to discover the guilty Person, that the rest might not labour under the Suspicion and Scandal of such infamous Treachery. *John* being so near Jesus, could ask him undiscern'd of the rest, whom he meant. He told him, it was he to whom he should give the next Piece of Bread, which he took out of the Dish ; and having given him that Mark to be known by, he presently put his Hand into the Dish, and took a Piece of Bread, and gave it to *Judas*. And notwithstanding Jesus had (*n*) warned him before of the Horribleness and Danger of the Sin, telling him, it had been better for that Man that he were sunk to the Bottom of the Sea, than be guilty of such treacherous Ingratitude ; yet by his not relenting, the Devil entred more forcibly into him than (*o*) before, hurrying him to a speedy Execution of his wicked Design ; which Jesus knowing, said to him accordingly, “ What thou dost, do (*p*) quickly.” None of the rest that were at supper understood the Meaning of this, unless perhaps *John* to whom he had given the (*q*) Token ; they thinking, because he was Almoner, that Jesus had order'd him to distribute something to the Poor. However, he had no sooner receiv'd the Sop, but the Devil immediately took possession of him ; and taking the Advantage of the (*r*) Night, the better to conceal his villainous Design, he withdraws from his Master and joins his Enemies ; who having bargain'd with him for a certain Price to betray him, impatiently expected a Performance of his Promise ; which they were not long disappointed of ; for Jesus never after saw him as a (*s*) Disciple, but as a Schismatick and Traitor, when he came with an armed Force to seize him in the Garden ; which was soon after.

(*n*) Warned. See *Mark* 14. 21. *John* 13. 27.

(*o*) Before. See *John* 13. 2. *Luke* 22. 3.

(*p*) Quickly. *John* 13. 27, 28, &c.

(*q*) Token. *Ibid.* v. 26.

(*r*) Night. *Ibid.* v. 30.

(*s*) Disciple. *Luke* 22. 47. *Judas* is called, *He that was called Judas, one of the Twelve.*

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XXVI. ³² Jesus said.
 Verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray me



ST MATTHEW 26. Verse 23. ^{164.}
 JESUS answered and said. He that dippeth
 his hand with me in the dish, the same
 shall betray me. —

Whilst these Things passed, the old Argument of (1) Supremacy is again revived; which Jesus suppresses, as he had done before, to prevent any Misunderstandings and ill Blood among them, which are too apt to be the Consequences of emulous Affectation; promising them a Kingdom, upon the same Terms that his Father had promised him one; adding, that they should be next to him, and at his Departure have the Government of the Church.

Then Jesus began his Farewel-Sermon, which was very curiously mixed with Sadness and Joys, and interwoven with Mysteries, as with rich Jewels: He discoursed of the Glorification of God in his Son, and of those Glories which the Father had prepared for him; mentions his sudden Departure, and his going to a Place whither they could not follow him yet, but afterwards should; meaning first to Death, and then to Glory; commanding them to love one another. Much about, or at this time Christ addressed himself particularly to *Peter*, saying, “ I tell thee, *Simon*, that upon the Oc-
“ casion of some Sin committed by thee, Satan has ac-
“ cused thee before God, and required that he may
“ have the shaking of thee, to drive thee from the Faith
“ of Christ: This is granted him, and the Danger
“ consequent to it is great; but I have prayed for thee
“ that thou mayst not be conquered by him, and his
“ Terrors, so as utterly to forsake the Faith; and for
“ the Sins thou shalt be guilty of in this Combat, let
“ this Use be made of them: When by Repentance
“ thou art recovered out of them, be more careful to
“ strengthen and confirm others, that they fall not in
“ the like manner.” *Peter*, who thought himself indued with Strength of Faith sufficient to oppose any Temptation or Misfortune, confidently protests his Readiness to suffer the worst, even Death itself, with his

(1) *Supremacy.* Some time before this, (*viz* before his Departure from *Zebedee's Wife* for her two Sons, *Mat. Jericho*, *Mat.* 20. 25, 29. nay before he came hither, *Mark* 10. 42, 46.) Disciples (occasion'd by the Request of *Zebedee's Wife* for her two Sons, *Mat.* 20. 20.) which of them should be look'd upon as the worthiest, and in there had been a Contention among the be preferr'd before the rest.

Master. But the Blessed Jesus, who knew his Weakness, foretels his denying him before the second (v) Crowing of the Cock that Night. Then foretelling the imminent Dangers that threaten'd, he admonishes them to provide spiritual Armour against them. “ For-
 “ merly, says he, I sent you without any Provision,
 “ and ye wanted nothing; but new Distresses are like
 “ to come upon you, and you will first see them fall
 “ most sharply on me.”

But lest he should afflict them with too sad a Representation of his present Condition, he relieves their drooping Spirits with the Comforts of Faith: Tells them their (w) Belief in him would afford them many Privileges against the Troubles of this World: Cheers them with the Intent of his Departure, which was in order to be their Harbinger, which Office he would in all Parts execute, by coming back and meeting them, to introduce them to Mansions of eternal Bliss in his Father's House. And to confirm their Faith the more, he tells them; “ You know the Place to which I go,
 “ and the Way which will bring you thither; I am
 “ the true and living Way, sent by my Father to di-
 “ rect all Men, and to reveal his Will to you, who
 “ have known him, as he is revealed to me. Tho'
 “ ye have never seen my Father, yet having seen and
 “ known me, who am his Image, ye have both seen and
 “ and known him.” Here *Philip* not considering in what Sense his Master spake, saith to him, “ Lord,
 “ shew us the Father, and that will convince us beyond
 “ any other Argument.” Jesus answers, “ I tell thee
 “ again, *Philip*, I am the Image of my Father, and he
 “ that hath seen me, and heard my Doctrine, hath
 “ seen my Father; why then this unnecessary Ques-
 “ tion? Do you not believe that whatsoever I do or
 “ teach, I do by my Father's Appointment? Take
 “ my Word for it; or, if you will not do so, let my
 “ Miracles which have been wrought before your

(v) *Crowing.* See *Mat.* 26. 34. *Luke* 22. 34.

(w) *Belief.* See *John* 14. 1, 2, &c.

“ Eyes convince you ; and be assured, that you, who
 “ have been my Disciples, shall be able to do the
 “ same (x) Miracles that I do, nay greater upon my
 “ sending down the Holy Ghost upon you.” Then
 adding a Promise in order to their present Support and
 future Felicity, he tells them, that if they should ask
 of God any thing in his Name, they should receive it ;
 and upon condition they would love him, and keep
 his Commandments, he would pray his Father to send
 the Holy Ghost upon them, to supply his Room, to
 furnish them with proportionable Comforts, to enable
 them with great Gifts, to lead them into all Truth,
 and to abide with them for ever.

(y) As he was going on the Way he continues his
 Sermon, exhorting them to Perseverance in the Faith,
 and to mutual Love. “ I am, says he, the true gene-
 “ rous fruit-bearing Vine, and my Father who hath
 “ thus planted me here in the World below, hath the
 “ ordering of me. Every barren Branch, or unpro-
 “ fitable Disciple, he cutteth off ; but every Member
 “ that is fruitful he pruneth, and maketh fruitful.
 “ You are already sanctified by the Operation of my
 “ Doctrine and Spirit upon you, tho’ you may need
 “ farther pruning to render you more fruitful. Do
 “ you therefore take care, by your Obedience and
 “ Constancy, that I may be so fastened in your Hearts,
 “ that I may never be provoked to withdraw myself
 “ from you ; for my Presence is absolutely necessary
 “ to you, to make you fruitful : As a Branch cut off
 “ from a Vine presently withers, so he that falls off
 “ from me, will soon be deprived of that Grace,
 “ which I distributed. As long as ye continue obe-
 “ dient to me and my Doctrine, all your Prayers
 “ shall be heard ; which will bring Glory to my Fa-
 “ ther, and give you a true Title to my Discipleship.
 “ I have very much enlarged upon these Things to you,
 “ that the Comfort you have taken in my Presence,
 “ may in my Absence continue to you ; and that by

(x) *Miracles.* See *John* 14. 12. (y) *As he, &c.* *John* 15. 1, 2, &c.

“ the Addition of that Comfort of the Spirit, which
 “ will visit you when I am gone, your Joy may a-
 “ bound. I charge you to imitate my Love to you,
 “ in mutually loving one another; a great Instance
 “ of which I shall shortly give you, in laying down
 “ my Life for you. I have given you the greatest De-
 “ monstrations of my Love and Friendship; for I
 “ have treated you as Friends, far above the Condi-
 “ tion of Servants, who use not to know their Mas-
 “ ter’s Intentions or Counsels, but only to do his Com-
 “ mands; but I have received you as Friends and
 “ Confidants into my Bosom, and made known all
 “ my Father’s Will to you. If ye shall meet with
 “ Infidelity and Persecutions, let this give you no
 “ Discouragement, but arm yourselves against it with
 “ this Consideration, that they thus treated me before
 “ you. The Hatred of the World to you will be a
 “ comfortable Symptom, that you are a peculiar Peo-
 “ ple of mine, dignified above and distinguish’d from
 “ the rest of Mankind. You must not think strange
 “ to be thus vilely used by the World; for if they per-
 “ secuted me your Lord, you must expect no better,
 “ and all that you shall suffer will be imputed to their
 “ not believing that God hath sent me. If I had not
 “ personally appear’d and done these Things among
 “ them, they might have pleaded Ignorance for their
 “ Excuse, but now they are utterly inexcusable; for
 “ I have said and done so much to evidence my Mis-
 “ sion, that the Opposing me is a malicious Resisting
 “ of my Father himself. By this they have fulfilled
 “ that of the (z) Psalmist, *They hated me without a Cause.*
 “ But when the Holy Ghost, the Advocate of my
 “ Cause, shall come, and whom I will send from the
 “ Father, he shall maintain my Cause against all Op-
 “ posers, and shall constitute you Witnesses of me to
 “ all, being the fittest to testify of me, because ye have
 “ been alway with me. (a) All that I have hitherto
 “ said is to fortify you, that you should not be de-

(z) Psalmist. See Ps. 35. 19. (a) All. See John 16. 1, 2, &c.

“ terred from my Service by the Hazards that attend
 “ it. Ye shall be ill used, and removed from the Sy-
 “ nagogues ; and they that treat you thus shall think
 “ it an acceptable Service to God, if they put you
 “ to Death ; the Cause of which is the great Im-
 “ piety of their Hearts, neither liking the Commands
 “ of my Father, nor those I bring from him. I thought
 “ it not fit to tell you these Things till I was ready
 “ to leave you, because whilst I was here, all the
 “ Malice of Men bent it self against me, letting you
 “ alone. But when I am gone from you, and you take
 “ the grand Imployment upon you of revealing my
 “ Father’s Will, the Opposition will light upon you.
 “ I know the Thoughts of my leaving you fill your
 “ Minds with Anxiety ; but let this comfort you,
 “ the Holy Ghost is not to come till I have left you,
 “ and his Coming will be of more Advantage to you
 “ than my Staying ; and when he cometh, he will
 “ plead my Cause against the World, and charge the
 “ *Jews* with three Sorts of Actions practised in their
 “ Courts. 1. With the Crime of not believing me to
 “ be the Messias. 2. He will justify my Mission and
 “ Innocence by my Ascension to Heaven, taking me
 “ away out of the Reach of humane Malice, and re-
 “ warding my Patience with his Consolation. 3. He
 “ shall take revenge upon Satan and his Instruments
 “ who crucified me, and retaliate Destruction upon
 “ them. Besides all that I have said, I have many
 “ Things more to communicate to you, but you can-
 “ not bear them now. However, when the Holy
 “ Ghost comes, whose Title is the (b) Spirit of Truth,
 “ he will instruct you what is to be done. What he
 “ doth shall tend to the Illustration of me : For he be-
 “ ing sent from my Father by me, shall in all Things
 “ accord with me, and thereby appear to have his
 “ Message from me, and to declare nothing to you,
 “ but what he hath from me. But whilst I say this,
 “ I mean not to appropriate to my self, so as to ex-

(b) *Spirit.* See *John* 16. 13.

“clude my Father; but because all Things are com-
“mon to me and my Father, and because all my Will
“depends on the Father, and that it is my Work
“wholly to attend my Father’s Will, therefore what-
“soever of this Nature the Holy Ghost shall reveal
“to you, I call that mine, and the Revealing of this,
“his taking of mine and declaring it to you. With-
“in a while I shall be taken from you for a Time,
“and soon after I shall be with you again, before
“my Ascension, for it is not possible for me to be
“held by Death: I must arise and go to my Fa-
“ther.” This latter Part of his Discourse his Dis-
ciples could not apprehend: Jesus therefore, to take off
the Difficulty, explains it, telling them, “You shall
“have a Time of Mourning, and the World of Joy;
“but your Sadness shall be turned to Rejoicing,
“and theirs ere long into Heaviness. Your Sorrow
“at my Death shall be like the Pangs of a Woman in
“Travail; but when it shall appear to you, that my
“Death doth but usher in my Resurrection and As-
“cension, as the Pangs of Travail do the Birth of
“a Child, then your Sorrow shall vanish at the Pre-
“sence of this Joy, which shall be lasting. When
“that Spirit is come, he shall teach you all Things,
“satisfy all your Doubts and Ignorances, that you
“shall not need ask me any more Questions. After
“my departing you shall use a new Form in your
“Prayers to God, which hitherto you have not used,
“make your Request to him in my Name, and upon
“the Account of your being my Disciples: and my
“giving you this Authority, and whatsoever tends
“to the fulfilling of your Joy, or to your real Good,
“shall be granted you. My Talk with you hitherto
“hath been obscure; but the Holy Ghost shall set all
“Things plainly before you. And one great Advan-
“tage you will gain by my Ascension and the De-
“scent of the Spirit, that you shall not need my of-
“fering up your Prayers for you, but you may in my
“Name offer them up to God your selves; and God,
“out

“ out of his Love and Regard to those that believe in
 “ me, shall grant all that you ask. I came from the
 “ Father into the World ; and now I leave the World,
 “ and go to my Father.” This was such a plain De-
 monstration of all that he had spoken, that the Dis-
 ciples scruple no more, their Apprehensions are en-
 lightned, and they no longer question Christ or his
 Mission. “ Now, say they, we perceive that as thou
 “ knowest all Things, so thou art pleased to reveal
 “ all saving Truth evidently to us of thine own ac-
 “ cord ; this convinces us that God sent thee, and
 “ that thou camest to reveal his Will.” Jesus percei-
 ving their Forwardness and Fondness, and knowing
 the Frailty of their Nature, tells them ; “ You speak
 “ a little confidently now of your Belief, whilst you
 “ are at a distance from Danger : But the Time is
 “ now at hand, that ye shall all desert me ; and
 “ tho’ ye believe in me, ye will not yet confess me,
 “ but leave me alone. But tho’ you shall all for-
 “ sake me, my Father will not ; for he will continue
 “ with me, will acknowledge me in Death it self,
 “ and raise me up from Death. This I have fore-
 “ told you, that you may depend upon me for all
 “ kind of Prosperity, by considering my Conquest
 “ over all that is formidable in the World ; therefore
 “ you ought not to fear, but take courage and hold
 “ out against all the Threats and Terrors of the
 “ World, and the Sufferings in it.” The Holy Je-
 sus having ended his Sermon, sings an (c) Hymn with
 his Disciples ; after which he goes with them over
 the Brook *Cedron* to the Mount of *Olives*, to a Village
 called *Gethsemane*, where there was a Garden, into
 which he entered to pray with his Disciples.

(c) *Hymn.* This Hymn was Part of
 the great Allelujah, beginning at the
 114th Psalm [When *Israel* came out
 of *Egypt*] and ending at the 118th in-
 clusively. It was the Custom of the
Jews after supper to sing Verses or
 Songs, especially over the Paschal Lamb ;
 at which time they sang the Psalms a-

bove-mentioned. And tho’ it is like-
 ly that this was the Hymn which Christ
 sang here with his Disciples ; yet it is
 not improbable, that it was some other
 Hymn accommodated to this particu-
 lar Institution of Christ’s, and this sung
 by them all, in the same manner as we
 read of the Christians Hymns, *Acts* 4. 24.

Being

Being in the Garden with them, he selects his Favourites, *Peter, James, and John*, and retires from the rest about the Distance of a Stone's Cast; where he began to be exceeding sorrowful and sad even unto Death. For now he saw the Ingredients of this bitter Draught pouring into the Cup, and the Sight was full of Horror and Amazement; therefore with the greatest Humility and Renunciation of himself, he prays, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this * Cup pass from me; avert this bloody and contumelious Death, if it be thy Will; if not, I more desire it than avoid it.* In this Prayer he fell into a sad Agony, and the Pains inflicted by his Father's Wrath were so great, that a Sweat distilled from his sacred Body as large as Drops of Blood; and God, who heard his Prayer, but would not answer it in kind, did yet send an Angel to comfort his human Nature in this Sadness, which he was pleas'd not yet to take away. But our Blessed Saviour, knowing that the drinking this Cup was the great End of his Coming into the World, and to which the Effects would be so advantageous, laid aside his own Interests, and divested himself of the Affections of Flesh and Blood, which entertain such dreadful Apprehensions of the great Struggle between Death and Nature, in an intire Obedience submits to his Father's Will; and because his Father commanded it, in Defiance of Sense and Passion, he was desirous to suffer all our Pains. Thrice did the Blessed Saviour of the World retire and repeat the same Prayer, "That, " if it were possible, the Cup might pass from him:" and thrice he made an humble Act of Resignation; and in the Intervals came and found his Apostles asleep; whom he mildly chides for their Incuriousness, warning them to watch and pray, that they

* *Cup.* The Afflictions which God sends on Men are often in Scripture express'd by the Name of a *Cup*. This is a Metaphor borrowed from an antient Custom of giving a Cup full of Poison to those that were condemn'd to die, as was done to *Socrates*; and *Gall*, accor-

ding to the Custom of the *Jews* on such occasions, to lessen the Pain of the Person that suffered. This Metaphor the Prophets made use of to express the Condition of the Wicked: and our blessed Saviour to express the painful Circumstance of his approaching Death.

enter

ST MATT. CILAP. XXVI. JESUS went a³³
way again the second time, and prayed, saying.



ST MATTHEW 26. Verse 42.^{172.}

*O my Father; if this Cup may not
pass away from me, except I drink it;
thy will be done.*

enter not into Temptation; and after he had the third Time finished his Devotions, coming to his Disciples, whom he found still sleeping, he says, “ You may
“ now enjoy your sleepy drowsy Humour; I shall
“ make no farther Use of your Vigilance; the Minute
“ is now come that I shall be apprehended and taken
“ from you, and carried before the Tribunal of the
“ *Gentiles.*”

Whilst the Blessed Jesus with his Disciples was retir'd to *Gethsemane*, *Judas* at the same Time having set him, goes to the Priests, with whom he had bargain'd to betray him, and tells them now was their Opportunity, for it was Night. This was the Advantage they desir'd, because they durst not take him by Day for fear of the People. Coming thither with an arm'd Multitude, and the Traitor *Judas* at the (d) Head of them, they enter the Garden, where they soon found what they sought for; but the Holy Jesus having by this Time join'd his Disciples, and standing among them, that the Guards sent to apprehend him might not mistake him, *Judas* had given them the Hint, that he whom he should kiss was the Person. But *Judas* might have spared this Part of his Treason, for the Divinity of his Master soon discover'd him. However, approaching him with an Address of seeming Civility, he kissed him. Then Jesus, seeing the Soldiers coming towards him, demanded whom they sought for? They told him Jesus of *Nazareth*; upon which, knowing his Time was now come, he tells them, I am he. Then offering with their prophane Hands to seize him, the impetuous Rays of Glory which issued from his Divine Face, struck so fiercely upon their Eyes, that they fell to the Ground. But these Soldiers, true Servants of the persecuting *Jews*, recovering from their Fall, and raised by the Permission of Jesus, still persisted in their Inquiry after him, who was ready and desirous to be sacrificed. But Jesus, as he had done before, begins the Inquiry,

(d) Head. See *Luke* 22, 47.

and leads them into their Errand, and tells them he was Jesus of *Nazareth*, whom they sought: upon which, offering to seize him, *Peter*, the bold zealous *Galilean*, seeing his Master thus ill used, attempts a Rescue, and asking his Master, whether he should make use of the (e) Sword in his Defence, before he had his Answer, cut off the Ear of *Malchus*, a Servant of the High-Priest. But Jesus rebuked the Intemperance of his Passion, and commanded him to put up his Sword, saying, *They that strike with the Sword shall perish with the Sword*; intimating hereby, that we ought to restrain all illegal Expressions of Anger and Revenge against a competent Authority. And then turning to *Malchus*, he touched his wounded Head, and cured him; adding to the former Instance of his Power, in throwing them to the Ground that came to take him, an Act of miraculous Mercy, in curing the Wound of an Enemy made by a Friend. But farther, to convince *Peter* of the Uselessness of human Power in his Defence, he tells him, (f) “If I would forcibly be relieved, I could pray to my Father, who would immediately furnish me with an Army of Angels. But the Prophets have foretold I must suffer, and their Predictions must be accomplished.” He therefore permitted himself to be taken, but not his (g) Disciples; for he it was that set them their Bounds; and he secured his Apostles to be Witnesses of his Sufferings and Glory, after which they were to have their Share and Fellowship in Affliction.

When our Blessed Lord in humble Resignation to his Father’s Will, and for the Redemption of the World, had yielded himself into the Hands of his E-

(e) *Sword*. There were two Swords in Christ’s Family, and St. *Peter* bore one: Either because he was to kill the Paschal Lamb; or, according to the Custom of the Country, to secure them from Beasts of Prey, which in those Parts were frequent and dangerous in the Night. But now St. *Peter* used it in an unlawful War; he had no competent Authority; it was against the

Ministers of his lawful Prince; and against our Prince we must not draw a Sword for Christ himself, he having forbidden it. As his Kingdom is not of this World, so neither were his Defences secular: Tears and Prayers being the only and proper Arms of the true Servants of Jesus Christ.

(f) See *Mat.* 26. 53, &c.

(g) *Disciples*. See *John* 18. 8.

nemies, his Disciples (*b*) fled : among whom was a (*i*) young Man, that had a linen Cloth cast about his naked Body, whom the Soldiers endeavoured to apprehend by laying hold on the Linen ; but he left it in their Hands, and (*k*) fled from them naked, tho' *Peter* followed his Master at a Distance. After the Soldiers had bound Jesus, they dragged him away to the (*l*) High-Priests ; but the House of *Annas*, which stood on Mount *Sion*, being in the Way to the House of *Caiaphas* the High-Priest, he was led thither, as to the first State of their Triumph over him. *Annas* being Prince of the *Sanhedrin*, had Cognizance of Prophets and publick Doctrines : he therefore inquired of Jesus concerning his Disciples, and his Discipline. But he answered, that his Doctrine had all along been very publick, preaching in their Synagogues and in the Temple, and never taught in (*m*) Conventicles ; and therefore referred him to the Testimony of all the People, that had been his Auditors. An Officer of the *Sanhedrin*, considering this Answer of Jesus to *Annas*, as a Violation of the Sanctity due to the Person of the High-Priest, and thinking himself authorized by the Judgment of the Zealots, (*n*) struck Jesus on the Face ; who, as became the Lamb of God, shewed as much Meekness and Patience in his Answer to him that struck him, as

(*b*) *Fled.* See *Mat.* 26. 56. *Mark* 14. 50, 51, &c.

(*i*) *Young Man.* This is by some supposed to be *John* the Evangelist, who thro' Grief forgetting to lay aside his upper Garment, which in Festivals they used to put on, began to make his escape ; but being arrested by his Linen upon his bare Body, he was forced to leave that behind him, that himself might escape his Master's Danger.

(*k*) *Fled.* When *John* had mastered the first Inconsiderations of his Fear, he returned, and was a while after in the High-Priest's Hall. See *John* 18. 16.

(*l*) *High-Priest.* *Annas* and *Caiaphas* are both called Chief Priests, *Annas* being a Man of principal Authority among the *Jews*, and *Caiaphas* placed

by *Pontius Pilate* the Procurator in the Pontificate ; for the Succession of the High-Priests was now changed, the one lineal Descendant in the Family of *Aaron*, which was to continue for Life, being not permitted to succeed, but some other, whom the Procurator pleased, named to that Office every Year, or renewed as often as he pleased.

(*m*) *Conventicles.* See *John* 18. 20.

(*n*) *Struck Jesus.* The Injury done to the holy Jesus in this Blow was heightened in two respects ; first, because the Person that struck him was one *Malchus* an *Idumean* Slave, a most contemptible Person ; and next, far more unworthy by his Ingratitude ; for so he repayed the Holy Jesus for working a Miracle, and healing his Ear.

in his Answer to *Annas* he had shewed Prudence and Modesty. (o) “ If there were any Evil in what I
 “ have said, accuse me, and prove it ; but if there be
 “ no Crime in me ; why dost thou strike me ? ” This was all the Protest the Son of the most High God made against so vile an Indignity.

Annas having suffer'd this unworthy Usage towards so excellent a Person, without any Resentment to the Person that offered the Affront, (p) sends him away to *Caiaphas*, who formerly in a full Council had prophetically resolved he should die. But now palliating the Design with the Pretence and Scheme of a formal Tribunal, they seek out for Witnesses, and when they had suborn'd them, they are to seek for Allegations ; nay, when they had with much Difficulty and Trouble found them, they are put to it for Proofs to make them good ; so that nothing fairly, and in the Eye of Justice answer'd their Purpose. But the true Reason of their making Use of this Resemblance of a judicial Proceeding was, because that without *Pilate's* Authority they could not put Jesus to Death, they might persuade *Pilate* to accept of their Examination and Conviction without farther Inquiry. But such was the Excellency and exemplary Piety of the Life and Conduct of the Holy Jesus, that whatsoever Questions of the Law they pretended against him, they fell so short of an allowable Accusation, that they could not be esteem'd Capital in a *Roman* Court. If they had affirm'd that he moved the People to Sedition, and affected the Kingdom, they plainly knew that all the People could convince them of false Testimony ; for his whole Life was one continued Series of Submission and Obedience to the higher Power, and to confirm which he put himself to the Expence of a Miracle in sending *Peter* to fish for Money to pay the

(o) See *John* 20. 23.

(p) Sends him away. *Annas* without the seventy Assessors could determine nothing, tho' he was Prince of the *Sanhedrim* ; and therefore he sent

him bound to *Caiaphas*, who was the High-Priest that Year, and President of the Rites of the Temple, as the other High-Priest was of the Council.

Collectors of the Tribute. At last, after many Attempts, they accused him of a figurative Speech; for some that had heard him speak of his own Death and Resurrection after three Days, under the Phrase of this (9) Temple, or the Temple of his Body, applied this to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and bare Witness that he said so of that. But if this had been spoken in a literal Sense, and had been acted too according to the Letter, it had been so far from a Fault, that it would have been accounted a Prodigy of Power. In the meantime the Lamb of God left his Cause to defend it self under the Protection of his heavenly Father, for himself was determined to die; and besides, the Malice and Power of his Enemies over-ruled all he could urge in his Defence; he therefore gave no Answer to their railing Accusations. Which Silence of his fulfilled a Prophecy; it made his Enemies murmur, and admire to see him with such Serenity of Mind despise their Accusations, as so many apparent Calumnies, and remain fearless of the Issue.

All Attempts hitherto to ensnare the innocent Jesus proving ineffectual, and at last his Silence confounding them, *Caiaphas* thinks he has a Reserve which will inevitably do the Business in that Assembly; and therefore to force him to break silence, he adjures him by the living God to tell him whether he be the Christ, the Son of God. The holy Jesus being adjur'd by so sacred a Name, would not now forbear an Answer, lest it might not consist with the Honour due to it, and which he always paid; and that he might neither despise the Authority of the High-Priest, nor on so solemn an Occasion be wanting to the great Truth, to which he came down from Heaven to persuade the World, he answers the High-Priest directly, owning himself to be the Messiah: Adding farther, “ I tell you, within a
“ while you shall discern this Son of Man, whom you
“ are now ready to crucify as Man, assumed into his
“ Throne, installed in his heavenly Kingdom; an Ef-

(9) Temple. See *John* 2. 19. *Mark* 14. 58, &c.

“fect of which shall be visible in his acting Vengeance
 “upon you, and that as discernably as if he were co-
 “ming with his Angels, who use to appear in bright
 “(r) Clouds.” Here the High-Priest had his End, and
 to Jesus it was no Disappointment, for he knew *Caiaphas*’s Design in putting this Question, to be an Inquisition of Death, not of Piety or Curiosity; and because his Hour was now come, he openly and frankly affirms himself to be Christ, the Son of the living God, without any Expedient to elude their Malice, or decline the Question.

The *Sanhedrim* having now gain’d the Point, as they miserably imagin’d, in making the Lord of Life accuse himself, trouble themselves no farther about (s) Witnesses, for *Caiaphas* in the Name of the whole Assembly accused him of Blasphemy, and pretended an Apprehension so horrible and tragical, that he over-acted his Wonder and feigned Detestation, for he (t) rent his Garments, which, tho’ it was the Custom of the Country, was yet forbidden to the High-Priest.

But whilst these Things were acting concerning our Lord Jesus, a sad Accident befel his Servant (v) *Peter*; for being engaged in strange and evil Company, and in the midst of Danger, tho’ agham’d of deserting his Master, yet willing to see what would become of him, being in the High-Priest’s Palace, he is three Times

(r) *Clouds.* See *Mat.* 26. 64.

(s) *Witnesses.* See *Mat.* 26. 65.
Mark 14. 63, 64.

(t) *Rent his Garments.* The rending of Clothes was an Expression of Indignation, holy Zeal, and Piety, among the *Jews*, expressed on several Occasions, especially of Grief in Humiliation, and of Anger in hearing any blasphemous Speech. But this was unlawful for the Priests in the common Acceptation, (see *Levit.* 10. 16. and 21. 10.) for the Prohibition mention’d in *Leviticus* extends only to the not tearing the sacerdotal Garments, that is, of those which are used only in the Priest’s Office (see *Exod.* 28. 32. and 39. 33.) and agreeably the *Jews* have a Rule, *He that shall tear any of the Priests Garments shall be beaten.*

It may not be unworthy of Observation

here, that by *Caiaphas*’s rending his Garments might be prophetically signified the rending of the Priesthood from him and the *Jewish* Nation; for usually God so dispenses his Judgments, that when Men in a theatrical hypocritical manner personate the Tragedies of others, they really act their own.

(v) *Peter.* He is thought by some to have Admission into the Council, by the means of another Disciple, supposed to be *John* (called by *St. Mark*, *ch.* 14. v. 50, 51. the young Man that left his Linen Garment in the Hands of them that were about to apprehend him) who having sold his Possessions in *Galilee* to *Caiaphas*, came and dwelt near Mount *Sion*; by which Bargain he was made known to the High-Priest, and so brought *Peter* into the High-Priest’s House,

challeng’d

ST MATTHEW C^{II}.XV^{VI}. Peter re³⁴
membring^y words of Jesus goes out & weeps bitterly



ST MATTHEW 26. Verse ^{179.} 5.
*And Peter remembered the words of
JESUS, which said unto him before the
cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice*

challeng'd by the Servants to be a *Galilean*, and of Jesus's family. Surpriz'd thus with a Question which would not allow him time to deliberate an Answer, he shamefully at first, and with some Assurance denied his Lord. The second Question gave birth to a licentious Confidence in him, which upon the (w) third grew to downright Impudence; for with horrid Imprecations and Perjury, he denied that he knew his Master, who yet was known to him as his own Heart, was dearer than his Eyes, and for whom he professed a little before he would die; but did not so till many Years after. The holy Jesus in the midst of his own Sufferings forgot not *Peter's* Danger; but looking back upon him when the (x) Cock crew, reminded him of his Prediction, and the Foulness of the Crime. This Lapse of *Peter's* was very afflicting, and his Sorrow very pungent, for he went out and wept bitterly; and being but newly fallen, and his habitual Love of his Master, tho' interrupted, not abated, he return'd with speed to the Embraces and primitive Affections of his Lord.

By this time suppose Sentence given; and *Caiaphas*, whose Influence over the *Sanhedrim* was as great as his Prejudice to Jesus, having first declared him to have spoken (y) Blasphemy, and the Fact to be notorious, demanded their Votes, which none durst (z) refuse; upon which they all condemn'd him as guilty of Death.

The next Morning the Council was to assemble; and whilst Jesus was detain'd in Expectation of it, the Soldiers and Servants offered all the Acts of Affront and Indignity they could invent to his sacred Person;

(w) Third. See *Mat.* 26. 69, 70, &c.

(x) Cock crew. It is reported of St. *Peter*, that ever after when he heard the Cock crew, he wept; remembering the old Instrument of his Repentance and Conversion, and his own Unworthiness, for which he never ceased to do Acts of Sorrow and Penance.

(y) Blasphemy. See *Mat.* 26. 66, &c.

(z) Refuse. Whosoever should have refused his Vote at that time, must have contested the Judgment of the High-

Priest, which none dared then to do; for *Caiaphas* was advanced to the High-Priesthood by the Favour of the Romans, *Valerius Gratus*, President of *Judea*, having been his Patron: So that his Faction was potent, as his Malice was great, and his Heart set upon this Business of condemning the innocent Jesus; all which Inconveniencies none of them durst have hazarded, unless they had the Confidence as great as that of an Apostle at that Time.

some spitting on him, some buffetting him, and others covering his Eyes, and smiting him, call on him to prophesy who smote him. All which Injuries must have been greater than his Patience, if his Patience had been less than infinite.

When *Judas* heard that the *Sanhedrim* had passed the final decretory Sentence of Death upon his Lord and Master, seeing the matter went farther than he intended, he repented that he had been an Instrument of so damnable a Machination, and came and brought the Silver which they gave him for hire, threw it in among them, and said, *I have sinned in betraying the innocent Blood.* But they, incurious of those Hell-Torments *Judas* felt within him, gave him poor Comfort, telling him it was nothing to them, being his own Act and Deed; and dismissing him, upon Consultation what to do with the Money (for it was the (a) Price of Blood) they agreed to purchase the Potter's Field, to bury (b) Strangers in. *Judas* having rid his Hands of the Money as a detestable Thing, departed to his own home, and was so affected with Horror and Despair, that in a Fit of Melancholy or (c) Suffocation he suddenly fell down upon his Face, burst and died.

And

(a) *Price of Blood.* It was a Custom among the *Jeus*, imitated after by the first *Christians*, that it should not be lawful for Executioners to offer any Thing, or for any Alms to be received from them (and the same also of Money that came out of the Publican's, or Quæstor's Exchequer;) and so by Analogy any Money with which a Life was bought was not to be put into the Treasury; it was the Price of Blood, and the Field bought with it called the *Field of Blood*.

(b) *Strangers.* The Strangers here meant may be either Men of other Nations, with whom the *Jeus* would have no Commerce, even when they were dead, and therefore provided a separate Burying-Place for them; or they might be *Jeus*, which coming from far to *Jerusalem* to sacrifice, died there before their return home; and so the Priests provided a Burying-Place for them: These perhaps might be those *Jeus* that

travelled from *Rome* thither.

(c) *Suffocation.* The Translations make *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* contradict one another very grossly in relating the Death of *Judas*. They make one say, *That he hang'd himself*, *Mat. 27. 25.* and the other, *That he threw himself down headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and that all his Bowels gushed out*, *Acts 1. 18.* This has obliged Interpreters to run to several Conjectures, equally ridiculous and groundless. Some say that he hang'd himself on a Tree, but the Branch yielding, and he falling to the Ground, could not strangle himself; and setting himself loose again, afterwards fell into a Dropsy, of which he burst and died. Others pretend, that having been seen by some when he was hanging, they took him down, and sav'd him; but that afterwards he went into a secret Place, whence he threw himself head-long, and then

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XXVII³⁵
They took Jesus into the common Hall.



180.
ST MATTHEW 27. Verse 28.
— And they stripped him, and
put on him a scarlet Robe. —

And here it is worth while to consider the great Folly and Infelicity of *Judas*, in the sudden Disappointment of his covetous Expectation: It was at Midnight he received his Money in the House of *Annas*, and betimes the next Morning he repented his Bargain, when he went and threw his Money back; but his Sin stuck close, and it is very much to be feared to a sad Eternity. Such is the Purchase of Treason, and the Reward of Covetousness: It is momentaneous and unsatisfactory in the Possession and Enjoyment, uncertain and sudden in its Stay and Departure, horrid in the Remembrance, and Ruin, certain miserable Ruin in the End. Nor is there so much as Room left for Pity in this remediless Case; for when *Judas* came in that sad Condition of Horror and Despair, and told his miserable Story to them that set him on Work, they sent him away unpitied: He had served their Ends in betraying his Lord, and those that hire such Servants use to leave them in Perplexity and Disaster, and expose them to Shame and Sorrow. The End of this Tragedy was, That *Judas* died an ignoble Death, marked with the Circumstances of a horrid Judgment, and perish'd by the most infamous Hands in the World, his own. Which, if confronted with the excellent Spirit of *St. Peter*, may be of vast Advantage and Use to us; for tho' by denying his Master he did an Act as contradictory to his Honour and the Grace of God as could be easily imagin'd, yet suddenly recollecting his shameful Cowardice, and

then swell'd and burst. *Maldonat* rejects these Fables, to make room for a very uncertain Conjecture of his own. He pretends that *Judas* threw himself from some Place higher than that on which he intended to hang himself, and that by the Force of the Swing when he cast himself off, the Rope breaking, he fell to the Ground, and burst; or that his Belly swell'd, as it commonly happens to such as die in that manner, and that a little after his Bowels burst out. But if the Translators have been mistaken in this Circumstance of the Death

of *Judas*, they have been no less so in rendering, *That he fell down, or threw himself headlong*; for the Words of the Original only signify that he fell on his Face, as several learned Men have observed. And what *St. Luke* adds, *That he burst asunder in the midst, and that his Bowels gushed out*, agrees very well with what Physicians observe, that those who die of the Squinancy sometimes burst. We ought therefore to translate, *And having fallen on his Face, he burst asunder.*

taking Sanctuary in the Arms of his Lord, he returned to his Duty, and became an Example to the World of the Excellency of divine Mercy, and the Efficacy of a holy Hope, and a hearty and timely Repentance.

All Things being now ready for the Purpose, the High-Priest with his Council intending to give Jesus over to the secular Power, carry him to the House of *Pilate*, that he might ratify their Sentence, and bring it to Execution by his Military Power, that so they might at once be rid of their Fears, and enjoy their Sin in Security. Coming thither, they would not enter into the Judgment-Hall, because of the (*d*) Feast, which *Pilate* knowing met them; and finding they had already passed Sentence upon him, he demanded the Grounds of their Accusation against him. But they unwilling any should inquire into the Particulars of their Proceedings, gave him a general Answer, *If he were not guilty, we had not brought him to thee*; intending not to make *Pilate* Judge of the Cause, but Executor of their Cruelty. *Pilate* being willing to decline the Business, bid them judge him according to their own Law. They replied, it was not lawful for them to put any Man to (*e*) Death. But *Pilate* seeing the Violence of their Malice, and their Design of making him their Property and Tool, was still more averse from intermeddling in the Condemnation of an innocent Person, and demands fresh Instances and Arguments of their Accusations. The *Jews* perceiving the Governor's Coolness and Indifference towards them, and his studious declining their Interest, very artfully attempt him: For knowing him to be a

(*d*) *Feast*. They would not go into the Governor's Hall, where there was a Guard of *Roman* Soldiers, lest being present among the Heathens they should be defiled; this therefore being a legal Pollution, would make it unlawful for them to eat the Passover, of which no unclean Person was to partake.

(*e*) *Death*. Meaning, during the seven Days of unleavened Bread; as appears in the instance of *Herod*, who detained St. *Peter* in Prison, intending af-

ter *Easter* to bring him out to the People. Others think that all the Right of inflicting capital Punishment was taken from the *Jewish* Nation by the *Romans*; and *Josephus* writes, that when *Ananias* the High-Priest had by a Council of the *Jews* condemned St. *James*, the Brother of our Lord, and put him to death without the Consent of the *Roman* President, he was deprived of the Priesthood,

Creature of the Court of *Rome*, and a Slave to its Greatness, the High-Priest, to the scandal of his Character, becomes Informer and Prosecutor, accusing Jesus of Sedition, denying to pay Tribute to *Cæsar*, and calling himself King. Here was an Impeachment of High Treason against the *Roman* Emperor, and of which, as they thought, the Governor could not but take strict Cognizance, tho' it was no Part of the Accusation of those Crimes for which they had condemned him. *Pilate*, tho' satisfied of the holy Jesus's Innocence, being caught by the subtle Craft of the *Jews*, could no longer evade the Trial of our Saviour, and therefore takes his Seat in the *Pretorium*, or Judgment-Hall, all the Discourse before happening at the Entrance ; for the *Jews*, who made no Conscience of killing the King of Heaven, yet made a Scruple of the external Customs and Ceremonies of their Law. The Court being sat, *Pilate* as Judge calls for Jesus, and asked him whether he was the King of the *Jews*. Jesus desired to know whether he asked this Question for his own private Satisfaction, or as a Crime laid to his Charge by the *Jews*. *Pilate* replied, " Can I know what the *Jews* out of their Books
 " and Prophecies expect and promise themselves ?
 " The *Jews* have laid this to your Charge, That you
 " pretend to be their King. What have you done to
 " give Occasion for this Charge ? " In answer to *Pilate*'s Question Jesus said, " I pretend not to an earthly
 " Kingdom : If I did, I should engage my Followers in a military Manner to assist me as their King,
 " and defend me from being delivered into the *Jewish*
 " Power ; but on the contrary it appears, that I pretend not to any such earthly Kingdom." *Pilate* then asked him whether he was a King. Jesus answer'd, " It is as thou sayest : I am indeed a King ;
 " I was born in human Flesh to this End, namely to
 " be a (*f*) King ; and for this Cause came I into the
 " World, that I should testify the Truth of God ;

(*f*) King. See *John* 18. 37. *Luke* 1. 32.

“ therefore I testify this, and every Servant of God
 “ is convinced of it, and accordingly receives and
 “ obeys me.” *Pilate* hearing *Jesus* disclaiming all secular Kingdoms, thought he had nothing to do to examine him about it; and therefore withdrawing from the Court to the Entry, where the *Jews* were impatiently expecting the Ratification of the *Sanhedrim*’s Sentence, in order to Execution, he, contrary to their Hopes, tells them he could find (g) nothing worthy of Death in *Jesus*. Upon this Disappointment the *Jews* grew exceedingly fierce and clamorous, charging *Jesus* afresh with teaching seditious Doctrine in all Parts of *Judea*, from *Galilee* even to this very Place. *Pilate* hearing them name *Galilee*, very pressingly desires to know whether *Jesus* was a *Galilean*; and being inform’d that he was, he readily takes hold of this Occasion to discharge himself from the *Jews* Importunity, and his own farther Concern in this unjust Trial: Besides, considering that *Galilee* was under *Herod*’s Government, and supposing *Herod* by his Knowledge in the *Jewish* Religion and Laws to be a fitter Judge for the Cognizance of this Case, he remitted the Hearing of it to *Herod*, who was then at *Jerusalem* upon the Occasion of the Feast. *Herod* was no less proud of the Honour done him by *Pilate*, than glad to have the Person of the Blessed *Jesus* in his Power; for having heard much of his Fame, he expected to see some Miracle done by him. Notwithstanding this Removal of the Cause from *Pontius Pilate* to *Herod*, the *Jews* were as furious in their Prosecution as before, and pursue the innocent *Jesus* to *Herod*’s Palace, where they renew their Accusation, and demand Justice. But the Holy *Jesus*, knowing it to no purpose to make any Defence before a prejudic’d Judge, and a partial Auditory, is altogether silent, neither justifying himself, nor gratifying *Herod*’s Curiosity, by shewing any extraordinary Performance before him as he expected. This gall’d the proud Tyrant’s Heart,

(g.) Nothing. See *Luke* 23. 4. *John* 18. 38.

who thought his Power could command any Thing with the Verge of his Dominion ; and therefore to be reveng'd, he delivers him to his Attendants, who use him with all the Ridicule and Ignominy they could invent, and which he bore with admirable Patience, shaming their brutal Deportment by his extraordinary Equanimity and Temper. *Herod*, having glutted his Revenge in exposing Jesus to the utmost Contempt, remands him back to *Pilate*, who assembling the *Sanhedrim* and People, makes this Speech to them. " Ye
 " have brought this Man before me as a seditious Per-
 " son, and Perverter of the People ; upon which Ac-
 " cusation I have strictly examined him before you,
 " but have not found him guilty in any capital Man-
 " ner of what is laid to his Charge by you. Nor is
 " this my Opinion only ; for I sent him, and referred
 " his Business to *Herod*, who, being more acquainted
 " with your Religion and Customs than I am, may be
 " allowed to be a more competent Judge ; and after
 " he had Cognizance of him, he has no way express'd his
 " Opinion that his Crimes are capital. His Punish-
 " ment therefore shall be only that of scourging with
 " Whips, and so he shall be discharged." *Pilate* at-
 testing the Innocence of Jesus by *Herod's* tacit, and his own positive Opinion, hoped to prevail upon the Rulers, by making it a Favour from them to Jesus, and an Indulgence from him to the Nation, to set him free. He was convinced of Christ's Innocence, and was willing to save his Life, by inflicting some inferior Punishment on him : But they peremptorily demand Execution, crying out, *Crucify him, Crucify him.* *Pilate*, still tender of shedding innocent Blood, expostulates a third Time with the cruel *Jews*, demanding what Evil he had done ; for as to his own Part, he could not see in what he had deserved Death. But the *Jews*, growing more noisy, demanded Execution. *Pilate* has still one Opportunity more of trying to release Jesus with the Consent of the People, tho' he had Power of himself to do it : This being the
Time

Time of the yearly Passover, a solemn Feast of the *Jews*, it was customary with the Procurator to gratify the *Jews*, by pardoning some Prisoner of that Nation; and, that it might be the greater Obligation to them, to give them Liberty to choose whom they pleased by Votes of the People. *Pilate* therefore offer'd that, according to the Custom of the Nation, Jesus should be released for the Honour of the present Festival, and as a Donative to the People. But in vain were *Pilate's* Attempts to rescue him from their Malice, which was so prevalent, that they desired *Barabbas*, a Thief, a Murderer, and a Rebel, might be exchanged for him. Then *Pilate*, still casting about all Ways to acquit Jesus of Punishment, and himself of Guilt, offer'd to (b) scourge him, and let him go. This so incens'd them, that they mix'd their Clamours with Threats; they boldly tell the Governor to his Face, If he did release this Man, he was no Friend to *Cæsar*: and instead of the innocent Jesus they demand the guilty *Barabbas* to be delivered to them, desiring to have him crucified that raised the Dead, and to have him releas'd that destroy'd the Living. When *Pilate* saw the *Jews* so obstinately resolute to destroy Jesus, and that all the Declarations of his Innocence, instead of allaying their Malice, did on the contrary make them ready to mutiny, he solemnly called for Water, and in the Presence of them all washed his Hands, to demonstrate his own Unwillingness, and transmit the Guilt upon them, saying, *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person, take it upon yourselves*: Who took it upon them as greedily as they sucked the Blood, cry-

(b) *Scourge*. *Pilate* being willing to deliver Jesus from capital Sentence, appointed this Punishment of Scourging to be inflicted on him: For it is evident that *Pilate* did not think Jesus guilty of any capital Crime, and consequently not worthy to be crucified. So likewise, besides his own Conscience, his Wife's Dream did make him not only very unwilling to pronounce Sentence of Death upon him, but very industrious to find some Pretence of re-

leasing him; and that finally, 'twas only the Importunity of the *Jews* to which he sacrificed him. From whence it is plain that he proposed this Scourging of Jesus to the *Jews* as a lighter Punishment, proportionable to his pretended Crimes, and then to release him. Which shews that this was not that sort of Scourging used by the *Jews* to Criminals condemn'd for capital Crimes before they were to be crucified.

ST MATTHEW CHAP. XXVII.³⁰

Pilates Wife is affrighted in a Dream.



ST MATTHEW 27. Verse 19.¹⁸⁷

*And sent unto him saying, have thou no
thing to do with that just man, for I have suff-
ered many things this day in a dream because
of him*

ing out, *His Blood be upon us and our Children.* The wretched Governor, who had hitherto been very solicitous to divert the *Jews* Malice from prosecuting the Holy Jesus to Death, at last yields to their importunate Cries, and was just about to deliver him to them; but as he was going to give Sentence, behold the Indulgence of Heaven in giving him another Warning, besides the Checks of his own Conscience, not to engage in this bloody Affair; the tender Wife of his Bosom, incited by the Terrors of her Dreams, with the Earnestness and Passion of a Woman, sends to him to dissuade him from meddling in the Death of that just Person. But the Governor, tired out with the importunate Clamours of the *Jews*, or rather threatened into a Compliance, his Wife's Solicitation comes too late; he is already engaged: *Cæsar* and Jesus, God and the King, seem'd to have two different Interests in him. And it is very much to be fear'd, that tho' *Pilate* was satisfied that the Accusation was but Calumny and Malice, yet he was loth to venture upon his Answer at *Rome*, in case the High-Priest should have accused him there: And therefore, not only against the Divine Laws, but against the *Roman* too, he condemn'd an innocent Person, upon Objections notoriously malicious, and adjudg'd him to a Death which was only due to publick Thieves, and Homicides, (Crimes with which he was not charg'd) upon a Pretence of Blasphemy, of which he stood accus'd, but not convicted, and for which by the *Jewish* Law he should have been stoned, if found guilty. And this he put into (i) present Execution.

And now the last Scene of this sad Tragedy was at hand, when the Holy Lamb was to be sacrificed to the implacable Malice of the blood-thirsting *Jews*. First therefore *Pilate's* Soldiers array him in a Royal Robe, put a Reed in his Hand for a Scepter, plat a Crown of Thorns and put it on his Head; they bow

(i) *Present Execution.* This was decreed in favour of condemned Persons that after Sentence passed Execution should be deferred ten Days. contrary to the *Tiberian* Law, which about twelve Years before this Time

the Knee, and mock him with a sham Profession of Allegiance; they smite him with his phantastick Scepter, and instead of Tribute, pay him with Blows and Spittings on his sacred Head: And when they had emptied their whole Stock of poisonous Contempt, they divested him of the Robes of Mockery, and put on him his own. They lead him to a Pillar, to which they bind him fast; and that they might add a new Scorn to his Afflictions, and make his Sorrows vast and mountainous, like their own Guilt, they scourge him with Whips, a Punishment that Slaves only used to suffer. The Soldiers execute this Part of the Sentence with Violence and unrelenting Fury, tearing his tender Flesh, till the Pavement was crimson'd with a Shower of his precious Blood. And in this mangled and torn Condition *Pilate* brought him forth, and shewed him a sad Spectacle to the People, who were so far from melting at the Sight of this deplorable Object, that they redoubled their clamorous Cries: Nothing but Crucifixion will appease them. Nothing then prevailing; nor the Innocence of Jesus, nor his Immunity from *Herod's* Sentence, nor the industrious Care of *Pilate*, nor the Misery of the afflicted Lamb of God, being capable of moving the hard-hearted Multitude, (*k*) *Pilate*, setting *Barabbas* at liberty, delivered Jesus to be crucified.

The Soldiers having fram'd a (*l*) Cross, laid it upon Jesus's Shoulders, and drove him out to Crucifixion:
But

(*k*) *Pilate*. The Jews took the Blood, which *Pilate* seem'd to wash off, upon themselves and their Posterity. And the Blood of this Paschal Lamb stuck upon them, and mark'd them, not as Cain to escape, but to fall under the Sword of the destroying Angel: And they perish'd either by a more hasty Death, or shortly after in the general Extirpation and miserable Ruin of their Nation. And *Pilate*, who had a full Share in Guilt, had yet a black Character of a secular Judgment; for not long after he was by *Nero* the Pretorian Prefect, sent to Rome, to answer

to the Crimes objected against him by the Jews, to please whom he had done so much Violence to his Conscience; and by *Cæsar's* Sentence he was banish'd to *Vienna*, and depriv'd of all his Honours, where he lived ingloriously, till thro' Impatience of his Calamity he killed himself with his own Hand. And thus the Blood of Jesus, shed for the Salvation of the World, became to them a Curse.

(*l*) *Cross*. It is generally supposed that Jesus bore the whole Cross, that is, the long Part, and transverse or cross Part; but to him that considers this, it will

ST JOHN CHAP. XIX. 37

And the Soldiers platted a crown of thorns,



ST JOHN 19. Verse 2. 3. 188.

*And put it on the head of JESUS, and said:
Hail KING of the Jews: and they smote him
with their hands.*

But when he was come to the Gate of the City, his tender Body weaken'd with the former ill Treatment, and being ready to faint under this additional Load of Affliction, they compell'd one *Simon a Cyrenean* to help him to carry his Cross; not out of any favour to ease him of the Weight, but for fear he should die by the Way, with less Shame and Smart than they intended him. Jesus being led out of the Gates of *Jerusalem*, a great and mix'd Multitude followed him to *Golgotha*, the Charnel-House of the City, and the Place of Execution: And tho' the profane Croud look'd upon him as nothing more than a Spectacle fit to gratify their impious Gazings, yet some tender Matrons burst into pious Tears at the Sight of his Sufferings; which Sadness of theirs was increased by the woful Predictions Jesus made of their approaching Misery, saying, "Weep not for me, ye Daughters of *Jerusalem*, but for your selves, and for your Children; for the Time shall come that Men shall say, *Blessed are the barren that never bare, and the Paps that never gave suck*; who have no Posterity to inherit the Calamities now ready to befall them. How dismal must their Condition be, who shall call to the Hills to cover them, and the Mountains to fall on them, to dispatch them by a sudden Destruction, that they may escape the lingring Calamities of Famine and Fear, and the Horror of a thousand Deaths."

When the Holy Jesus was come to (m) *Golgotha*, they offer'd him Vinegar mingled with (n) Gall to drink;

will seem impossible. This *Lipsius*, in his Treatise *de Supplicio Crucis*, seems to set in a true Light, saying, That Jesus only carried the transverse Beam, the long Piece of Timber being before fix'd in the Ground. This is indeed more likely, and more agreeable to the old manner of crucifying Malefactors, and that Jesus only carried the cross Part, the Body of the Cross being upon the Place either already fixed, or prepared for its Station. And therefore, says the same Author, Painters are very

much mistaken in their Description of Jesus carrying the whole Cross.

(m) *Golgotha*. It was a Place in Mount *Calvary*, where, according to the Tradition of the Ancients, viz. *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Athanasius*, and others, *Adam* was buried, and where *Abraham* made an Altar for the intended Sacrifice of his Son.

(n) *Gall*. Interpreters, and others, vary very much about this Passage, taking it two different Ways, as *St. Matthew*, ch. 27. v. 34 and *St. Mark*, ch. 15. v. 23.

drink ; but he refused it. Then the Soldiers, just ready to finish this bloody Tragedy, strip our Blessed Lord of his Clothes ; and when they had nailed his prostrate Body to the Cross with four Nails, they fix'd the Cross in the Ground, which, by its Fall into the Place of its Station, must needs occasion infinite Torture by so violent a Concussion of the Body of our Lord, which rested upon nothing but four great Wounds. Here the Saviour of the World was designed by his pitiless Enemies to suffer a long and (o) lingering Torment : For Crucifixion, tho' it was a sharp and exquisite Pain, was not expeditious in taking away Life.

And now behold the Prince and Sacrifice of the World laid (p) naked upon the Altar of the Cross, bleeding, tortured, and dying, to reconcile his Father to us. But the Officers of this Execution, not contented with the Indignities they had hitherto offer'd to his sacred Person, add yet this one more to the rest of the Ignominy, crucifying a Thief on each Side of him to detract the more from his Innocence. And whilst he was in his Agony upon the Cross, he might see his Executioners extending their Cruelty to him in the most minute Degree, dividing his Man-

v. 27. seem to express it. Some will have it, that in St. *Matthew's* Sense Vinegar mingled with Gall was a bitter poisonous Draught, to stupify the Person that drank it, that benumbing the Sense he might feel less Pain. Those that differ from this, say, That by the Piety of some of the Disciples, and, it is probable, of some of those good Women who used to minister to Jesus, there was prepared Wine mingled with Myrrh, which according to *Pliny*, among the *Alexandrines*, is an excellent and pleasant Mixture, and such as the Piety and Indulgence of the Nations used to administer to condemned Persons, to fortify their drooping Spirits against the Terrors of approaching Death. But be it which way it will the holy Jesus, by a voluntary taking our Nature upon him, did choose to suffer the Pains thereof without the Refreshment their

Piety intended, either by stupifying his Sense, or fortifying his Spirits.

(o) *Lingring Torment.* St. *Andrew* was two whole Days upon the Cross ; and some Martyrs have upon the Cross been rather starved and devoured by Birds, than killed with the Torment of the Tree.

(p) *Naked.* It is a very good Observation that *Origen* makes of the Deportment of the *Jews* : St. *Matthew*, ch. 27. v. 31. mentioning the *Jews* stripping our Blessed Saviour of the Robes, does not take any notice that they took off the Crown of Thorns, but they crucified him with that on his Head ; which shews they retained their covetous Temper, in leaving him nothing of any Value, their Avarice and Cruelty pursuing him to the last Moment of his Life.

tle into four Parts, giving to each Soldier a Part ; but as to his Coat, which was one intire Piece, and weaved without Seam, because it would be spoiled, if divided, they cast Lots for it.

Pilate, who had contrary to his Conscience, and thro' Fear of losing his Government, sacrificed Jesus to the *Jews*, had caused a (q) Title, containing the Cause of his Death, to be superscribed on a Table in *Hebrew*, *Greek* and *Latin*, to be set over his Head on the Cross, *JESUS OF NAZARETH KING OF THE JEWS* : But the Pharisees would have it alter'd, and *That he said he was the King of the Jews*. But *Pilate*, whether out of Wilfulness, or Spite to the *Jews*, who had contrary to his Inclination forc'd him to sacrifice our Blessed Lord, or in Honour to Jesus, whom he knew to be a just Person, or whether he was overruled by a divine Providence, refused to alter it.

Whilst the innocent Jesus was in the midst of all his Torments, no Accent of Murmur, no Expression of Resentment to his Persecutors passed his Lips ; but instead of that a holy and charitable (r) Prayer for his Enemies, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* While he was thus full of Pain and Charity, praying and dying for them, those of the *Sanhedrim* that were present deriding him, upbraided him with the good Works he had done among them, saying, *He saved others, himself he cannot save* ; others saying, *Let him come down from the Cross, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him* ; and others, according as their Malice was dictated by Fancy or Occasion, added all the Weight and Scorn to his Pains they could : And among the rest, of the two Male-

(q) *Title.* This Title or Inscription was written after the *Jewish* manner, from the right Hand to be left, the *Latin* Letters being to be read as if they were *Hebrew* : The Reason of which is supposed to make it more legible to the *Jews*, who by conversing with the *Romans*, began to understand a little *Latin*.

(r) *Prayer.* This Prayer is said to

have been so efficacious, that within five and fifty Days after our Saviour's Crucifixion eight thousand of his Enemies were converted. So potent is the Prayer of Charity, that it prevails above the Malice of Men, turning the Arts of Satan to serve the Designs of God ; and when Malice occasions the Prayer, the Prayer becomes an Antidote to Malice.

factōrs

factors that were crucified with him, (s) one blasphemously reviled him, saying, *If thou be the Christ, save thy self and us.* But the other Thief, whom the present Pains and Circumstances of Jesus's Passion had soften'd into a happy, tho' late Belief, reproved his Fellow for not (t) fearing God, confessed their Shame and Unworthiness, that they suffer'd the Punishment due to their Sin, but that Jesus suffer'd undeservedly; and to shew the Strength of his early Faith, he prayed, *Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom;* which express'd not only his Faith, but an incomparable Modesty and Humility. He knew himself so sinful, he durst ask no more. But the Holy Jesus, notwithstanding his human Nature labour'd under extreme Torment, with so much Tenderness entertains this Application of the pious Thief's Devotion, who acknowledg'd him for his King and Saviour, that he gives him a speedy Promise of Felicity, assuring him, that that very Day he should be with him in Paradise.

By the Cross of Christ stood the Holy Virgin-Mother, a sad Spectatrix of this dismal Tragedy, attended with her Sister, *Mary the Wife of Cleophas, Mary Magdalen,* and *John*: And now was literally verified upon her the Prophecy of old *Simeon*; for her Grief, tho' sad and silent, was yet as pungent as a Sword passing thro' her very Soul. The Holy Jesus in his Agony sees his sorrowful Kindred deploring his Sufferings, and considering his Mother as a Widow, and in a short Space of Time to be childless, willing to

(s) *One.* If we compare *Mat. 27. v. 44.* (where 'tis said, *That the Thieves who were crucified with Jesus cast the same in his Teeth*) with what we find in *Luke 23. 39.* (where 'tis said, *One of the Malefactors that was hanged rail'd on him, &c.*) we may be apt to fancy some Contradiction between the Evangelists. But this the Commentators reconcile, by shewing that the Plural Number is used in those Places for the Singular, which is very common in the Style of the *Hebrews*;

as, when it is said, *That the Ark rested on the Mountains of Ararat, Gen. 8. 4.* that is, of one of the Mountains: *That God overthrew the Cities where Lot dwelt, Gen. 19. 29.* whereas *Lot* could dwell but in one at a Time; and several other Examples. But it would be much more reasonable to make these Difficulties disappear in a Translation design'd for the People, who are Strangers to rules of Criticism.

(t) *Fearing God.* See *Luke 23. 40, 41, 42, 43.*

ST LUKE CHAP. XXIII. ³⁸
The people with y^e Rulers derided Jesus.



ST LUKE 23. Verse 36. 192.
And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, saying, If thou be the King of the Jews etc.

make a Provision for her, that she might not be exposed to Necessity and Want, calls to his favourite Disciple *John*, making him her adopted Son, and her his Mother, saying, *Woman, behold thy Son*; and, *Man, behold thy Mother*. And from that time *John* took her to his own House, which he had near Mount *Sion*, after he had sold his Inheritance in *Galilee* to the High-Priest, where he always paid her the Respect due to a Parent.

During these sad Transactions the whole Frame of Nature seem'd to be dissolv'd; the great (v) Luminary of the World withdrew his Light, the Heavens put on dark and gloomy Mourning, and nothing but dismal Horror cover'd the Face of the Earth at the Sight of such a Prodigy of Sin and Sadness. The Eclipse and Passion began at Twelve, and lasted till three of the Clock; about which Time the Holy Jesus being tormented with the intolerable Load of his Father's Wrath due for the Sins of Mankind, and wearied with Pains and Heaviness, began to complain, as if God had deserted him in his Extremity, crying out, (w) *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

After this the Holy Jesus, just upon the Point of Expiring, considering that almost all the Prophecies concerning him had punctually been fulfilled; to complete the (x) one remaining Prediction, he calls for something to drink, saying, *I (y) thirst*; well knowing that, according to the Psalmist, they would give

(v) *Luminary.* At the Time of our Saviour's Passion, the Sun was so darkened, that the Stars appeared; and the Eclipse was prodigious in the Manner, as well as in Degree, because the Moon was not then in Conjunction, but Full: And it was noted by *Pblegon*, the freed Man of the Emperor *Adrian*, by *Lucian*, out of the Acts of the *Gauls*, and *Dionysius*, while he was yet a Heathen, excellent Scholars all, great Historians and Philosophers; who also noted the Hour of the Day, and Day of the Week, agreeing with the Circumstances of the Cross.

(w) *My God.* It is thought by some
[Vol. 3.]

that he repeated the whole two and twentieth Psalm, which is a pathetick and admirable Narrative of the Passion, full of Prayer and Sadness, and Description of his Pains at first, and of Joy and Prophecy at last. But these Words, which it is certain and recorded that he spake, were in a Language of it self, or else by reason of Distance not understood; for they thought he had called for *Elias* to take him down from the Cross.

(x) *One remaining.* See Psalm 69. 21.

(y) *Thirst.* See John 19. 28, 29, &c.

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him

him (z) Vinegar; which accordingly they did, and one of the Soldiers filled a Sponge with Vinegar, and wrapped it about with Hyssop, and put it on a Reed, that he might drink. But Jesus only tasted it, refusing to drink. And now knowing that all the Prophecies concerning his human Life were fulfilled, his Father's Wrath appeased, and his Torments satisfactory, he said, *It is finished*; and bowing his Head, as in a Gesture of Adoration and Prayer, he said, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*, and so expired. Thus did the glorious Sun of Righteousness set in sad Clouds of Darkness here, in order to shine more illustriously hereafter.

Nor did Nature yet cease to shrink at the Perpetration of such unnatural Barbarities, for this sad Tragedy was concluded with a most unusual Scene of Horror. At the Expiration of the Holy Lamb, the (a) Veil of the Temple rent in the midst, from the Top to the Bottom; and so great an Earthquake happened, that the (b) Stones of the Temple gave way and broke, the Graves opened, and the Bodies of many pious Men, which had been dead, arose out of their Tombs, and (c) after his Resurrection they also went into the City of *Jerusalem*, and were there seen and known by many. This last Scene of Horror so struck the Apprehensions of the Spectators with Amazement, that

(z) *Vinegar*. The Vinegar and the Sponge were in Executions of condemned Persons set ready to stop the too violent Flux of Blood, in order to prolong the Death: But to the Blessed Jesus they were exhibited in Scorn; for being mingled with Gall, the Mixture was more horrid and unpleasant.

(a) *Veil*. See *Mat.* 27, 51, &c. The Veil of the Temple was the Partition Wall of Stones, which separated the secret *Mosaic* Rites of the Sanctuary from the Court where the People assembled, and skreen'd the Holy of Holies from their View.

(b) *Stones*. The Word *Petræ* which in our Translation is render'd *Rocks*, must relate most properly to the Tem-

ple, and therefore be render'd *Stones*. For this Earthquake cannot, as is conceiv'd by some, be supposed to be that Earthquake which happen'd in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*, which destroyed twelve Cities of *Asia*. But by the Text it appears to belong only to the Temple of *Jerusalem*, the Parts of which are mention'd, *viz.* the *Veil*, the *Ground*, and the *Stones of the Building*, the *Tombs*, &c. And it's not improbable, that this Prodigy was shew'd particularly on this Place, to foretel the Destruction of the Temple and its Service, for their crucifying Christ.

(c) *After*. See *Mat.* 27, 53.

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from the Prodigies they conclude him (*d*) innocent ; and smiting their Breasts with Fear and Remorse at what was done, they returned sorrowful. But none were so deeply affected as the Centurion, or Captain of the *Roman* Guard, that attended the Execution ; for he, by immediate Conviction from what he saw, (*e*) affirms him to be the Son of God.

The Day of our Saviour's Crucifixion being the Preparation or Eve to the Paschal Festival, which fell on the *Jewish* Sabbath, and so a Feast and a Sabbath together, the *Jews*, that the dead Bodies might not hang on the Cross till the Day following, hasten'd to take them down ; and therefore sent to *Pilate*, to order their Legs to be broken, that they might be taken away and buried. Which was accordingly done, and the Soldiers came and broke the Legs of the two Thieves, but seeing, and wondering that Jesus was already dead, they did not break his Legs, for the Scripture had foretold, that a (*f*) Bone of him should not be broken. But a Soldier with his Lance, revengefully intending to supply the Defect of that Custom, which he thought they neglected, by not breaking the Legs of Jesus, pierced his holy Side, and immediately there gushed from the Wound (*g*) Water and Blood.

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After

(*d*) *Innocent.* See *Luke* 23. 47.

(*e*) *Affirms.* See *Mat.* 27. 54. *Mark* 15. 39. This Centurion was converted by the Sight of our Lord's Crucifixion, and became a Disciple : And renouncing his military Employment, died a Martyr.

(*f*) *Bone.* See *Psalms* 34. 20. The Occasion of this Custom must either proceed from a Design of finishing the Execution ; or, lest after they were taken down from the Cross and left, they should come to Life, and escape by running away : The last of which this breaking of their Legs did effectually prevent.

(*g*) *Water and Blood.* St *John* the Evangelist, who was an Eye-witness of this Passage, affirms it in a particular manner, *ch.* 19. v. 35. and in

his first Epistle, *ch.* 5. v. 6. he makes use of it, as of great Moment, saying, *This is he that came with Water and Blood, not with Water only, but by Water and Blood.* The Water was the Emblem of all spotless Purity, and the Blood was the Evidence of his Fortitude and constant Patience, laying down his Life for the Truth of God : And these *Two* testify the Necessity of their being in every one that believes aright in Christ. But among the many and great Importances of the *Water* and *Blood*, the Antients have observ'd also, That by a special Act of God's Providence, there flowed at this Time from Christ's Side, the Two Sacraments of his Church, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord,

After this in the Evening, *Joseph* of *(b) Arimathea*, an honourable *(i)* Counsellor, who was one of Jesus's Disciples, but durst not own himself openly, for fear of the *Jews*, went confidently to *Pilate*, and begged the Body of Jesus. *Pilate*, scarcely believing Jesus was so soon dead, calls the Centurion who was present at the Crucifixion, and asked him, whether he was yet dead? Who assuring he himself saw him expire, *Pilate* gave Order for the Body to be delivered to *Joseph*; who with Joy and Haste prepares to embalm it according to the *Jewish* Manner of Sepulture, sparing for no Cost in Perfumes and Unguents to adorn the Funeral: To which Charge, *Nicodemus*, another latent Disciple of Christ, is no mean Contributor; for he brought an hundred Pound Weight of Myrrh and Aloes for the same Purpose. Having *(k)* wound up the Body in the Materials of Embalment, *Joseph* gives the Corps of his Lord the Honour of Priority in a new Sepulchre, which in an adjacent Garden he had prepared for his own Interment; it being unlawful among the *Jews* to inter a condemn'd Person in the common Cœmeteries. However, all other Circumstances were according to the *Jewish* Manner.

The Body of the Holy Jesus being thus decently and devoutly interr'd by his Friends and Disciples, the Chief Priests and Pharisees about Sun-set, in a whining Manner address themselves to *Pilate*, saying, Sir, *We remember that that Deceiver while he lived said, After three Days I will rise again.* “Therefore to pre-

As to the natural Reason of the Flux of Water and Blood from our Lord's Wound, Anatomists affirm, That there is a *Capsula* near the Heart, called the *Pericardium*, which hath Water in it, of continual Use to cool the Heart; and that the coming out of Water here with the Blood, was a Testimony of the Wounding his very Heart.

(b) Arimathea, is the Place where *Samuel* was born and bred up, called by the *Hebrews*, *Ramathaim Sophim*, in *Greek*, *Armatbaim*.

(i) Counsellor. He was either of the *Sanhedrim*, or one of the *Decuriones*, or Commissioners for managing the Affairs of the Province: Or perhaps he was both. Because *St. Luke* 23. 51. says, *he consented not to the Counsel and Deed of them.*

(g) Wound. The Clothes which *St. John* 19. 40. mentions, in which our Saviour was wrapped, were Swaths proper for the Dead. In relation to which it is, that in *Acts* 5. 6. they are said to wind up *Ananias* when he was dead.

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ST MATTHEW CHAP. XXVII.³⁰

The chief Priests & Pharisees came together unto Pilate.



ST MATTHEW 27. Verse 63.^{197.}

Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.